

Lilacs

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of the International Lilac Society

IN
THIS
ISSUE:

Membership Issue



Syringa x hyacinthiflora 'Chiffon'
Photo credit: Colin Chapman

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COVER PHOTO: Robert Clark standing in front of *Syringa vulgaris* 'Professor Robert Clark', Fiala 1982. Photo credit: Carolyn Merrill

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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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President's Message and Newsletter

As I write, all possible comment must take second place to the news of the death of Bob Clark. Bob's passing leaves us with just one treasured charter member who attended that inaugural gathering at Bayard Cutting Arboretum in 1971 and was also on the Board of Directors at the first Annual Meeting of the International Lilac Society at Highland Park, Rochester, New York, on May 19, 1972. Our surviving member is Mrs. Ellen Steward, and that meeting in Rochester was organised by the then Executive Vice President, Dr. Robert B. Clark.

In the *Lilac Newsletter*, the forerunner of *Lilacs*, Bob Clark wrote about the newly revealed Rochester Strain lilacs. From the first moment of reading his words (in a copy graciously given to me by Rob Gilbert many years ago), I became hooked on Bob's writing. In that article he wrote: "Here at Highland Park one can see the world's largest lilac collection and learn more about lilacs and their culture than by reading many books! One must see them to appreciate them in all their beauty."

There were many more articles that impressed me. One, in particular, titled "Cultivated since Ancient Times" (*Lilac Newsletter*, Vol. IV, No. 5, May 1978) first buried my nose permanently and irretrievably into lilac history. Another was a magisterial feature over five editions (*Lilac Newsletter*, Vol. XI, No. 7–11, July–November 1985) on the personalities behind the names of the Lemoine cultivars. Through reading these articles and countless others, I made a personal vow to live up to his standards of clarity and erudition in my own writings. Yes, I confess, I modelled my own writing on his.

Over the last few editions I have been exhorting members to put pen to paper and send to this journal their views and observations. When I composed the "New Dawn" article, I deliberately limited my praises to projects that had been written up and published here or in other magazines. I was pleased, therefore, that in Victoria's first edition as editor, two very worthy enterprises were written up at last. I loved Joe Bertino's account of Rob and Sabra Gilbert's Pie in the Sky, which I visited in May 1995. To appreciate that name one really has to experience the elevation of the site. I was also delighted to read Jeff Young's account of the ILS project on Mackinac Island, which is a place that enchanted me in 1997—and still does. These two items confirm that the new dawn is still breaking.

I was remiss, however, because I forgot two projects that had been written about recently in *Lilacs* and that I experienced for myself in 2002 and 2004. I need to make amends by celebrating first the work of Rudy Schaffer and his helpers at the Descanso Gardens in California. The collection was superb. It is a long time since I have come across, in one place, so many lilacs that I did not

know. I was taken by many, but one in particular stole my heart: *Syringa* × *hyacinthiflora* 'Chiffon', J. Sobeck, La Canada, California 1966. Long stems end in multi-spiked inflorescences, each made up of tight, single florets. The lobes are long, almost rectangular with slightly rounded tips and they reflex backward uniformly. The florets were all open when I saw the plant so the colour might have faded slightly, but in the strong morning sunshine, it appeared to be a pale shade of shellfish pink. Each individual thyrsus was so exquisite that I could see, at last, why this hybrid is likened to a hyacinth. This is the most hyacinth-like lilac that I have ever seen and one of the most beautiful. Alas, it is not for me. Out here on the windswept East Anglian prairie, its tender charm would wither and perish so all I can do is gaze at its picture and envy Rudy and his gallant crew.

The other project was the long triangular lilac walk in Nebraska City, Nebraska. It was here that I saw in bloom for the first time Kolesnikov's lovely, soft blue-lilac double *S. vulgaris* 'Andryusha Gromov'. Sadly, my hand shook so the photograph I took is unusable. Much notable work has been accomplished here by Max Peterson, Janet Fricke, and Hoyt Lambert and it deserves to be celebrated. So does the private lilac walk of Don and Bev Maxon. What other projects are there out there? If there is a lilac planting of note near you? Please write it up and tell us. We cannot be proud of things "that we know not of."



From left to right: the Park Ranger, Darlene Peterson, Max Peterson, Janice Fricke, Hoyt Lambert at Arbor Lodge Historical Park, Nebraska City, Nebraska.

Photo credit: Colin Chapman

I now hang my head in shame because I gave a wrong attribution in my last piece commenting on the contribution to the Society by former editor Dr. Owen Rogers. I ascribed the origin of *Syringa* (Villosae Group) 'Anna Amhoff' to Owen when, of course, it should have been attributed to Albert F. Yeager, also of the University of New Hampshire. I know why this happened. At the Convention, held at the University in 1994, Owen led us to one of the most exquisitely flowering shrubs I had ever—at that time—seen. A lovely, rounded shrub having graceful, arching stems that terminated in pure white inflorescences of superb quality. This was the original plant, and my mind was so captured by it that it shut out Owen's explanation of its history. From that day to this I have associated 'Anna Amhoff' with that magical moment, and with Dr. Rogers who gave that moment to us. Thus, I do not apologise for my mistake; I am merely putting the record straight. I would also like to put it on record that last year, ten years after first seeing it, 'Anna Amhoff' flowered here at Norman's Farm for the first time.

The 2005 flowering was a big disappointment due to nights of air frosts in May and early June. I have mentioned these frosts before and I know that the distinction has puzzled some of you. Again, you have to remember that this country has a maritime climate that is much influenced by the Gulf Stream, on the one hand, and the Jet Stream, on the other. Winter ends early and, indeed,



Syringa (Villosae Group) 'Anna Amhoff'

Photo credit: Colin Chapman

in recent years has hardly made an appearance at all. It has, however, a nasty habit of creeping back in April and early May after the lilacs have been beguiled into putting out new foliage shoots and expanding, and even opening, the flower buds. If a frost strikes at this time there are two possibilities. Either it is a ground frost that affects the ground only and remains at grass level, or it is an air frost that freezes the air above the ground also. The new growth can survive the former but not the latter. In the extraordinary case of a temperature inversion, where a layer of freezing air is trapped under warmer air, the precocious growth beneath the inversion boundary is lost. This year we had an inversion that reduced all fresh growth below ten feet into a mushy black mess, but all flowers and foliage above that height survived. Thus, to us, an air frost is not just any old frost that freezes everything and does so when hardy plants are blissfully dormant. It is a frost that strikes with lethal deadliness after a hardy plant has already started to grow again in the spring. The distinction between ground and air frost is therefore vital to us during those vulnerable weeks. I believe that in North America there is a technique of spraying susceptible growth with a mist of water when a frost is threatened. I would much appreciate if someone would write in *Lilacs* about the theory and the technology of this practice. So-called experts like me need tips as well as beginners!

Thus, though the 2005 flowering was a bit of a disaster, there was a miracle lurking around the corner. By mid-July, we became aware of a massive surge in new growth stimulated by my immediately cutting away all the frost-blighted wood. Lilacs that had struggled for ten years to get away suddenly stood up to be counted. We had the biggest surge of new growth ever experienced here. My four foot *S. vulgaris* 'Lady Lindsay' surged to eight feet high in just three months. A *S. vulgaris* 'Charles Lindbergh', which had grown just two feet in eight years and has never flowered, put out twenty-six, two-foot stems each bursting with fresh buds. Things are setting up nicely for a good display next year—always providing, of course, that there are no more late air frosts.

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

In Memoriam: Robert B. Clark

Robert B. Clark, of Meredith, New Hampshire, and Ocala, Florida, died October 20, 2005, in Ocala.

Bob realized the direction of this life at a very young age, when, one fine spring day in 1920, at six years old, he took a nail and poked a hole through the new shirt that his mother had sewn for him and made a boutonniere with violets. He pursued his interest in botany and left behind an impressive history of accomplishments.

Robert B. Clark was born February 24, 1914, in Sharon Massachusetts, the son of Robert A. and Gertrude E. (Stevenson) Clark.

He graduated from Sharon High School in 1932 and received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1936, where he majored in landscape architecture and minored in botany.

He worked at Bay State Nurseries, drawing planting plans, from 1936–1937. He was an apprentice at the Missouri Botanical Gardens in 1938–1940. While in Missouri, he received his Master's of Science degree in taxonomy from Washington University in St. Louis.

In 1941–1942, Bob served as an apprentice at the Arnold Arboretum, returning to the Missouri Botanical Gardens in 1942 as an arborist.

Bob's career was interrupted from 1942–1946, to serve his country as Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force, two of those years in the European Theater of Operations.

He resumed his career as an assistant professor of ornamental horticulture at the College of Agriculture at Rutgers University from 1947–1960. Bob was assistant director of the Bayard Cutting Arboretum from 1961–1962, senior curator of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Hortorium of Cornell University from 1962–1964 and was plant taxonomist for Monroe County Parks Department, Rochester, New York, from 1964–1972.

Bob retired in 1973 to Birchwood, his garden in Meredith, New Hampshire.

As a charter member of the International Lilac Society and past editor of the ILS Journal, Bob hoped the ILS would continue to focus on the Society's original goals of education, research, and promotion of lilacs.

He enjoyed retirement, spending six months of the year in Birchwood, tending his lilacs and the garden he had created. The other six months Bob spent in Ocala, Florida, with friends Molly and Pat Pesata. He enjoyed being able to visit with his sister, Virginia Buker, who lives in Port St. Lucie, Florida.

Bob was a good friend, generous with his knowledge and his plants. We will miss him.

Sources, continued from page 7

This history was written by Robert B. Clark and given to Howard and Carolyn Merrill. It was then completed with help from his sister, Virginia Buker, and information contained in *Flowering Trees* by Robert B. Clark.

Remembering Robert B. Clark

My first meeting with Robert B. Clark was in Rochester, New York. At the time he was the curator of the Monroe County Parks Department's impressive and rich plant collection. As a forester, I was taken by the size, diversity, and landscape display of the tree and shrub ornamentals in various locales of the park. Yet, I was struck even more by Bob Clark's wealth of knowledge and his joyful readiness to act as a guide. Often, he had an interesting anecdote about the specimen plant we observed.

But that was not the main reason for my visit to Bob Clark, Dick Fennichia, and Alvan Grant, the Director of the Parks. Hamilton's Botanical Gardens had received \$50,000 from a private donor to expand its lilac collection, which, at the time, had only 68 lilac taxa. Necessary arrangements had been made for Ray Halward, then the RBG Plant Propagator, and me to transport thousands of softwood lilac cuttings of new cultivars that did not yet exist in Hamilton. The task required several trips in a van filled with specially constructed boxes, lined with Styrofoam and stored on ice. While Dick Fennichia would come and go, directing the ground force on various park maintenance or projects, Bob Clark was faithfully at our side, guiding us from cultivar to cultivar while we collected cuttings and made necessary field notations. The RBG Hamilton accrued the greatest number of new lilac cultivars from Rochester, New York, for which Bob Clark was our most selfless aide in many aspects.

Though the RBG Hamilton collection grew to surpass the Rochester collection in size, in my tours through the lilacs I would often mention how the RBG Hamilton lilac collection is a descendant of the Rochester one, pointing out that the only reason why it is larger is strictly genetic. In the majority of instances, subsequent generations are a bit taller and larger than their predecessor or parent.

Equally so, a considerable amount of lilac propagating material was disseminated from RBG Hamilton's collection to various locales of Europe, Asia, New Zealand, and Australia. Bob Clark helped, in many ways, to make this possible.

There were many other areas where my professional activity merged or touched with those of Bob Clark. To mention some: clarification of information dealing with lilac cultivars, work associated with ILS publications, various committee work, and the list goes on.

His living quarters at Birchwood, New Hampshire, which I had a pleasure to visit, speaks volumes about Bob Clark: plant lover. The time and energy required to maintain the grounds in such high profile while constantly adding new plants was immense.

Thank you Bob for your wisdom, shared knowledge, and readiness to help!

Charles Holetich
Waterdown, Ontario, Canada
October 2005

30th Anniversary: Kent Millham

Congratulations are in order for Kent Millham. Kent recently celebrated 30 years of service to the Monroe County Parks Department at Highland Botanical Park.

As did most of us connected with Highland Park, Kent started at the bottom, did his job quietly and consciously, and he was rewarded with promotions over time. This system was a good one because we all learned the tasks and what was required and expected. Times changed and as a consequence many duties are easier, but employee numbers have dropped significantly, thus those left have a great deal more to do.

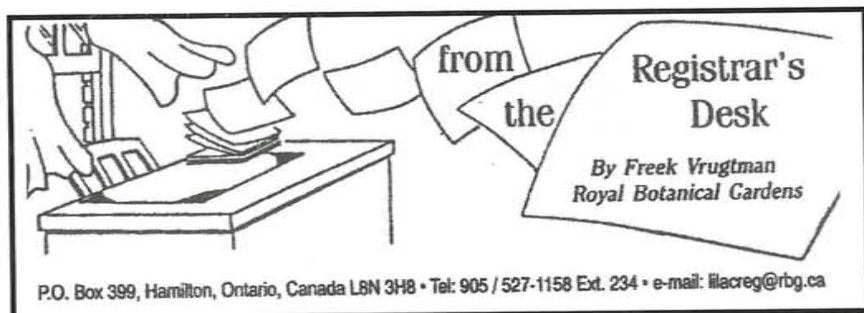
Kent has adjusted well and learned much along the way. However, he also remembers the way things were previously done. This experience, along with an interest in the history of the Park, has enabled Kent to become a knowledgeable representative of Highland Botanical Park and its lilac collection. He may well be the last of a long line of horticulturist that spent their careers at Highland and the Rochester/Monroe County Parks.

We wish him many more years of service to both the Park and ILS.

Bob Hoepfl
Rochester, New York
November 20, 2005

Next Deadline

Please note, the deadline for the spring issue of *Lilacs* will be significantly earlier this year. To insure its publication before the 2006 ILS Convention, the deadline for the next journal is **February 15, 2006**. While this may seem inconvenient, please remember, it will allow you access to the most convention information possible. Early submissions will still be greeted with a smile.



The Sagitova Lilac Originations

Mrs. Mar'yam Galimovna Sagitova, 1923–2001, senior lecturer at ABAY Kazakhstan Pedagogical Institute, Almaty (formerly known as Alma-Ata), Republic of Kazakhstan, with the assistance of her husband Tadeush Vikent'evich Dzevitsky, 1918–2000, their son Oleg Dzevitsky, and daughter Milada Tadeushevna Dzevitskaya, evaluated some 300 lilac seedlings during the period 1945–1991. About 32 selections were named, three of which were registered in 1991 with the statutory registration authority of the USSR, and eight in 1994 with the statutory registration authority of the Kazakhstan Republic; other selections have remained unnamed. The selection work was carried out at ABAY Kazakhstan Pedagogical Institute and the plants were grown there; however, the site had to be cleared in 2004, and the lilac collection no longer exists.

Information on distribution of propagules to private and public collections, and information on commercial introduction of these cultivars is not yet available.

The names of the lilacs that have received statutory registration are

Syringa vulgaris

'Akku', 1994; single, white

'Almaatinka', 1994; double, bluish-purple

'Gul'der', 1994; double, light magenta

'Ma_gul', 1994; single, purple with light pink shade; white dot on the lower side of the petals; fading to a lighter, smoky shade

'Mar'yam', 1994; single, light purple with pinkish shade; fading to a silvery shade

'Milada', 1994; single, light pinkish-purple with crimson shade

'Oleg', 1994; double, light pinkish-purple; outer corolla more intensely colored than inner

'Podarok Mame', 1991; single, pale purple with pinkish shade; fading to bluish violet

'Serezha', 1994; single, dark purple; fading to violet shade

'Suyunshi', 1991; single, light purple

'Tadeush', 1991; single, dark magenta.

Named but not registered:

'General Panfilov', 1994; double, purple-violet.

Although currently maintained only in Russian, there are two internet web sites of interest that relate to the late Mar'ya Sagitova and her lilacs, namely

<http://lilac.caresd.net/> and <http://milada.next.uz/>

Acknowledgements

Milada T. Dzevitskaya provided copies of the statutory registrations, descriptive information on the cultivars, and checked the spelling of names.

Charles D. Holetich provided translations of the registration documents.

Lilac Cultivar Name Registration 2004

International Registrar: Freek Vrugtman, International Cultivar Registration Authority Genus *Syringa* L., Royal Botanical Gardens, Box 399, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3H8, Canada.

All correspondence concerned with additional information or plants or propagules of newly registered lilac cultivars should be directed to the registrants listed below, not to the Registrar.

Commencing with Lilac Registrations 1995 standard portfolios are being established in accordance with Division V: Nomenclatural Standards, of the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants*, 7th ed. (ICNCP-2004).

Previous registration lists of *Syringa* cultivar names appeared in *AABGA Bulletin* [13(4):105–110; 14(3):95; 15(3):71–72; 16(4):131–132; 17(3):67–69; 18(3):87]; *HortScience* [23(3):458; 24(3):435–436; 25(6):618; 26(5):476–477; 29(9):972; 31(3):327–328; 32(4):587–588; 33(4):588–589; 34(4):600; 35(4):549; 36(5):836; 37(7):1145; 38(6):1301; 39(6):1524].

Syringa L. (Villosae Group) 'Marie Rogers' was registered 9 April 2003, by Professor Emeritus Owen M. Rogers, Plant Biology Department, University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2617, and the late Walter W. Oakes (1928–2005) of Dixfield, Maine. The original plant was, selected and named by W. W. Oakes in the late 1990s. It was selected from a batch of 1992

seedlings received from O. M. Rogers; these seedlings were open pollinated progeny of *S. × josiflexa* '86-1' (Rogers 1994). The selection first flowered in 1995; plants were first propagated in 1997. Commercial introduction will be by Syringa Plus, P. O. Box 363, 44 Belvedere Road, West Boxford, Massachusetts 01885. The selection was named by W. W. Oakes in 1999 for Marie Rogers, wife to O. M. Rogers. The 'Marie Rogers' lilac was selected for its compact thyrses and the radially double florets, two unusual characteristics in *S. × josiflexa* cultivars and in the series *Villosae* C.K. Schneider in general. It is a large shrub to 4.5 m; nonsuckering when on its own roots. Leaves are rugose; flowering is 10 to 14 days after most *S. vulgaris* cultivars; it has true terminal buds; thyrses are compact, not unlike those of *S. vulgaris* cultivars; it has fully formed flower buds with color Violet Group 71-A, opening to Violet Group 81-C [Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), 1995]; and 40 to 60 percent of the florets are radial doubles. Recommended propagation is through softwood cuttings taken at the time of full bloom. The cultivar is known to be hardy to USDA Zone 4.

A standard portfolio has been opened at Royal Botanical Gardens Herbarium, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, (Acronym: HAM) but is still incomplete.

Syringa L. 'Purple Haze' (*S. protolaciniata* × *S. oblata* subsp. *dilatata*) was registered 18 December 2003, by its originator Plant Propagator John H. Alexander, III, The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, 125 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts 02130-3519. The ortet or original plant (AA 2-92-C) from which the clone was derived originated in 1992. It was selected by John Alexander from a group of six seedlings in May 2002. The parents of the controlled cross are *S. protolaciniata* (♀ AA 577-81-A; probably 'Kabul'; received as cuttings from the Botanic Garden of the University of Copenhagen, Denmark; coll. S.1966-1 of Dr Klaus Ferdinand, collected in Barbur Jabul, Afghanistan), and *S. oblata* subsp. *dilatata* (♂ AA 789-67-A; vegetative propagation from AA 10202, collected by E. H. Wilson in North Kankyo, 35 km west of Yeiko, Korea). This is believed to be the first successful cross of these two species. Plants of this cultivar will be introduced and distributed by The Arnold Arboretum. *Syringa* 'Purple Haze' is a vigorous shrub with a globose habit. Leaves similar to those of *S. × chinensis*, but occasionally lobate or lacinate. Flowering time coincides with that of *S. × hyacinthiflora* cultivars. Thyrses are 10 to 14 cm long, 5 to 7 cm wide; florets are 18 to 19 mm in diameter; corolla lobes are slightly reflexed; moderately fragrant. Flower bud color Purple Group 75-A, opening to 75-B, eventually fading to 75-C (RHS, 1966, 1986). It is fully winter-hardy in USDA Zone 5; but not yet tested elsewhere. A standard portfolio has been opened at Royal Botanical Gardens Herbarium, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, (Acronym: HAM) but is still incomplete.

Syringa pекinensis Rupr. 'Morton'—Peking lilac update

Jianhua Li, John Herbert Alexander, III, and Donglin Zhang demonstrated

Accordingly, the botanical name *Syringa pекinensis* should be applied to the recently registered cultivar name 'Morton', which has been published in *HortScience* [38(6):1301].

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Royal Horticultural Society. 1966. Royal Horticultural Society colour chart. Royal Hort. Soc., U.K.

Royal Horticultural Society. 1986. Royal Horticultural Society colour chart. Royal Hort. Soc., U.K.

Royal Horticultural Society. 1995. Royal Horticultural Society colour chart. Royal Hort. Soc., U.K.

Published in *HortScience* 40(6):1597—October 2005.

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Tips for Beginners: Chemical-Free Lilacs

Commercial fertilizers are abundantly sold for lawns and gardens but their use for lilacs or other landscape plants should be questioned. Granular fertilizers need adequate soil moisture to activate their elements. Slow release nitrogen fertilizer is more beneficial than straight urea nitrogen fertilizer because it is less likely to leech into the water table. However, the only certain method that will determine whether your lilacs actually need supplemental fertilizer applications is to have a soil analysis completed for the landscape every three years. Most landscape beds have adequately balanced soil. Too much supplemental nitrogen fertilizer can cause other elements to be deficient in the soil, create fertilizer burn from the salt concentration in the product, and increase the likelihood of disease infection in nutrient rich foliage. Composted humus lightly incorporated on the surface and spread as mulch supplies the necessary plant nutrition, establishes and maintains a healthy microbial soil population, retains moisture in the soil, and controls weed encroachment. There's a good chance the composted humus is free from your municipality's leaf pickup program.

Commercial insecticides are widely available and can be as dangerous to humans as they are to insects. Many insect infestations occur as secondary plant stresses. The vast majority of stress-induced problems in lilacs occur in the soil. Lilacs need good soil drainage. Prolonged periods of precipitation can outpace the rate of infiltration, stressing and weakening natural plant defenses that ward off insect infestations. Prolonged periods of drought also induce plant stress. Insects tend to have particular plant hosts and the lilac is no exception. Hard scale insects, such as San Jose scale, euonymus scale, and oyster shell scale induce stress that can kill a lilac. Lilac bore infestations can also be fatal to older lilac specimen. Bore and scale insects can be controlled with either relatively harmless means or potent insecticides. Most insecticides, however, eliminate beneficial predator insect populations, creating favorable long-term survival for the targeted insect. Control the insect infestation and ameliorate the causal factor in the soil environment for healthier lilacs.

Control lilac bore by pruning older wood right to the base, removing the wood from the site, and allow younger vigorous suckers to mature. Lilac bore needs older wood for its habitat. Younger lilac wood also produces more robust flowers at a height where they can be enjoyed. Regular pruning keeps lilac bore in check.

Scale insects persist on smooth lilac bark where they extract nutritional fluids. Effective control is achieved by spraying either dormant oil or insecticide soap or both mixed together on the bark when the crawlers emerge in spring. A solution of dish soap or insecticide soap kills the young scale insects without harming beneficial predator insects. Dead scale insects adhere to the lilac so the gardener must verify the application was successful. Pruning the infested branches and removing the debris from the site can also control limited scale infestations.

Dave Gressley
Holden Arboretum
December 2, 2005

Errata: Volume 34, Number 4

Please note the following corrections to the Fall 2005 issue.

Inside front cover: The top caption should identify the lilac pictured as *Syringa × prestoniae*, with a "t" in it.

Pages 97 and 98: *Syringa × josiflexa* Seedling 86/1; Seedling 86/1 is not a cultivar epithet, but a breeders designation or breeders code; as such it must not be enclosed in single quotation marks.

Page 106 and 123: *Syringa* (*Villosae* Group) should be *Syringa* (*Villosae* Group).

A History of the Lilac Lady

As you drive through the small town of Woodland, Washington, it is hard not to notice the lilacs. The houses, especially the older ones, often have a lilac beside the front porch or in the front yard. The "Welcome to Woodland" sign is flanked by lilacs. You'll see them near City Hall and on the main street. And although Woodland is located in an area of rapid growth, the lilac bushes seem to keep her anchored to another era. We can credit this to a woman known as the Lilac Lady.

Hulda Klager was born in Germany, came to the U.S. in 1865 at two years of age, and then moved to the Woodland area at age 13 in 1877. Her parents came to farm the fertile area that was regularly flooded by the Lewis and Columbia Rivers. Before Washington became a state and before Woodland was a town, the Theils brought their family out west to begin a new life. Perhaps it was this pioneering spirit that gave Hulda the strength of character for which we honor her, even today.

Hulda married a German-born man, Frank Klager. They were dairy farmers on part of the original Theil farm along the banks of the Lewis River. Hulda's memory of lilacs she had enjoyed as a small child in Wisconsin inspired her to learn about the relatively new process of hybridization being explored by Luther Burbank. Her first experiment was to improve the size of apples growing on an existing tree at the farm. She wanted larger apples that wouldn't take so long to pare. By crossing Wolf River, a mild apple, with Wild Bismarck, a sour juicy apple, she achieved the desired result. Although she began by improving the quality of apple she got from her fruit tree, she expanded her endeavors to lilacs, camellias, rhododendrons, and even Scotch broom. Her favorite and most successful work proved to be the quest for a more beautiful and interesting lilac. By 1910, she had 14 new varieties to show for her efforts. Ten years later she had enough varieties that she began to host an annual open house during the spring bloom. She continued to host this event until her death in 1960.

Hulda and Frank's oldest daughter, Elizabeth, shared her mother's interest in the hybridization process and developed several rhododendrons. Their youngest, a boy nicknamed Fritz, never married and lived his whole life on the farm, supporting his mother's efforts with the lilacs. Only when Frank died in the 1920s did Hulda briefly lose heart. Fritz encouraged her to continue with her work and this proved to be wonderful advice.

Throughout her life, Hulda worked to develop new colors, stronger growth habit, and more beautiful lilacs, registering many of those she found to be worthy of such honor. Although her early efforts were fairly basic, she eventually had such a wonderful garden, filled with such an extensive variety of lilacs that people flocked in each year as she welcomed them to come see and smell

the lilacs. She took their orders during the bloom and then dug shoots of their choice in the fall. She did sell through a few nurseries but she preferred to sell directly to the gardener. She felt that her hard work gave her the right to have the fun of meeting and getting to know her customers.

Besides the help from Fritz and Elizabeth, Hulda hired local youths to help maintain her garden. We are told that she expected the same hard work of them that she expected of herself. Her determination was the trait that many admired in her the most. She simply refused to let the various disasters that came her way sway her from her goals.

The year of her greatest professional disaster was 1948. The Lewis River and the mighty Columbia River both flooded, rising halfway up the first floor of Hulda's home. The waters were trapped behind the dikes that enclose Woodland to protect the farmlands from such high water. After six weeks, the flood finally drained away leaving total destruction. With the exception of a couple of the tallest trees, everything Hulda had worked so hard to raise was gone. At 85 years of age, she faced the monstrous task of trying to start over, from the beginning. Her tough nature banished all thought of giving up. When her many customers and fans heard of her plight, they dug up and sent starts from the lilacs she had sold or given them. With her skill and hard work, she had the garden up and ready for the spring bloom in two years.

When all of Hulda's children had passed away and she needed help to remain at home, her granddaughter, Irvina and husband moved in to help. When Irvina died suddenly of a stroke, her husband, Mac continued to care for Hulda. In 1960, Hulda died peacefully in her sleep at the age of 96, leaving a legacy of fragrant lilacs to continue to grow. Mac and his second wife were too old to continue to care for the lilacs and for 15 years, the gardens suffered from neglect. Then in 1975, when a developer's bulldozer threatened the lilacs, the local garden club championed the cause. Through hard work and good luck they were able to save the gardens and establish the Hulda Klager Lilac Society that continues to operate the gardens today. The farmhouse has been restored to its Victorian beginnings. The Society weighs all changes to the house and gardens carefully as to authenticity. The gardens are recognized as a Washington State and National Historic site. The volunteers operate the gardens as a nonprofit organization. Our goal is to not only preserve the lilac heritage, but to maintain the gardens for visitors to experience the tranquility of a pioneer Victorian farm and garden. We celebrate the Lilac Open House each year between mid-April and Mother's Day where volunteers sell lilac plants to support the gardens and house. The Society has been able to resurrect Hulda's tradition of welcoming guests to view the lilac bloom every spring.

It is a great honor to welcome the International Lilac Society in 2006.

*Ruth Wendt
November 17, 2005*

Donations from Auction Benefit the ILS

The ILS Annual Auction and Plant Sale scheduled for Friday, April 21, 2006, during the convention not only gives members the opportunity to purchase rare lilacs but also benefits the ILS. All proceeds from the event go directly to the organization. The ILS uses the auction earnings to support our annual expenses and whenever possible allow us to aid lilac enthusiasts with research funds.

Auction items may be sent ahead of the April convention dates. Roberta Peterson, a member of the Hulda Klager Lilac Society ILS Committee and co-owner of Peterson Farms, is ready to receive items now. Nursery stock will be appropriately cared for until the convention.

Donations for the auction should be sent to:

ILS Auction—Roberta Peterson

2530 Dike Road

Woodland, WA 98674

(360) 225-9388

Wanted: Convention Reporter

In years past, the *Lilacs* editor has always attended the conventions. Unfortunately, this year, I will not be able to make the trip. The journal needs your help. I am looking for an energetic reporter to recount the stories, details, and highlights of the convention. If you are interested, please contact the editor at tory.woodruff@verizon.net or (617) 451-6292.

Book Your Convention Flight Today

While the convention may seem in the distant future, it will be here before you know it. The timing of the 2006 ILS Convention coincides with many college vacations. As a consequence, many flights are already booked. Don't wait any longer; book your airline ticket today.

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.

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.

Taxi Service Available from PDX Airport to Woodland

An established taxi service in Woodland, Washington, the Woodland Taxi, runs regular shuttles to and from the Portland Airport. This service may be useful to ILS members who would rather not rent a car and need to drive to Woodland, Washington.

Owner Tony Smith informed Janice Fillman, Hulda Klager Lilac Society ILS Committee member, that his service is available 24 hours a day. Woodland Taxi charges a \$3 "drop fee," in addition to \$2 per mile and \$1 for each additional passenger over the first. Smith said the average cost from the Lewis River Inn in Woodland (one of the ILS convention hotels) and the Portland Airport is roughly \$60.

ILS members who would like to use this service should telephone Woodland Taxi at (877) 225-7314 and pre-arrange a pickup time at the Portland Airport. Networking with other convention attendees will reduce the cost of the taxi. The total charge can be divided by the number of passengers riding in the taxi. The estimated \$60 charge would be \$30 if two travel together, \$20 if three travel together, etc.

ILS members interested in using Woodland Taxi should make pre-arrangements by April 10, 2006. If necessary, the firm has the resources to provide additional transporters if more than four people have reserved pickup service.

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*.

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.

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.

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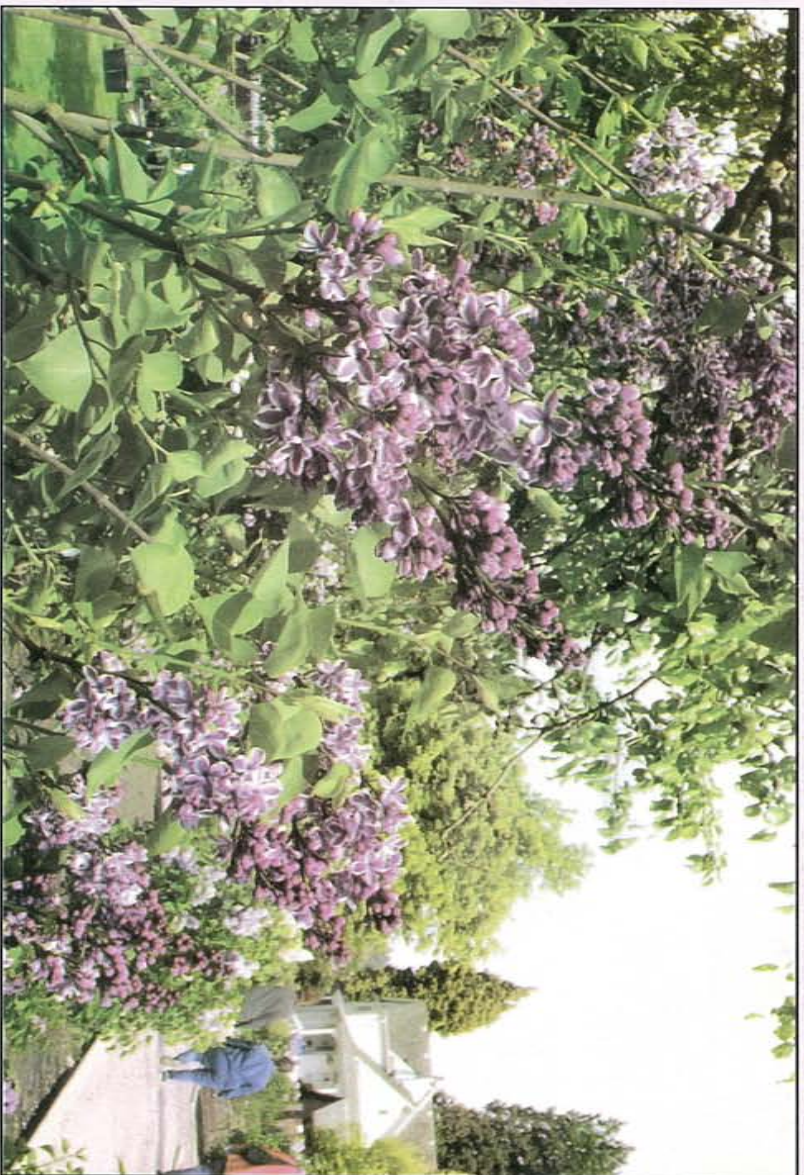
Rhododendrons hybridized by Hulda's daughter, Elizabeth.

Photo credit: Ruth Peabody



A portrait of Hulda Klager.

Photo credit: Ruth Wendt



Syringa vulgaris 'Sensation' in the foreground shows the newer lilac display beds at the Hilda Klager Lilac Gardens and the rear of the farmhouse can be seen in the background.

Photo credit: Anonymous