

Lilacs

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of the International Lilac Society

IN
THIS
ISSUE:

Lilacs of Richard Fenicchia,
UNH and Laimonis Karklins



Syringa × *josiflexa* 'Jesse Hepler'
Photo Credit Bruce Peart

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<i>Front Cover:</i> Beautiful cluster of <i>S. xjosiflexa</i> 'Nellie Bean', a UNH hybrid of Albert Yeager Photo Credit Richard Hinchcliff	

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President's Message

Dear Lilacs Friends,

The ILS Board of Directors voted on February 25, 2013 to designate May as International Lilac Month. This good idea originated from Frank Moro, Chairman of Long-Range Committee, a longtime ILS Member and a resident of Canada. I think identifying a special month to celebrate this beautiful shrub was long overdue. Most of the lilacs in the Northern Hemisphere bloom around the month of May.

Now it is your turn to decide the best time to celebrate with a Lilac Day, a Lilac Sunday, a Lilac Festival etc... Some lilacs do bloom earlier than May and some later. Tatiana Poliakova had suggested choosing a special date for your celebration such as for our members in Russia May 18th the day Leonid Kolesnikov was born. Know that this year they are celebrating the 120th anniversary of his birth.

We need to recognize the other half of the world, the Southern Hemisphere, where spring comes in September 1st. October would be a good month to be International Lilac Month. They could celebrate Victor Lemoine's birthday since he was born October 26, 1823. Celebrating lilacs do not need to be at bloom time. A symposium on lilacs in the middle of our respective winters would do a lot to cheer one up and build enthusiasm for the spring season and the planting of lilacs in our gardens.

Can we cover the world in lilacs? I see it happening with the progress being made with lilacs growing and thriving in hot climates. Be sure to read Dr. Michael A. Dirr's *The Joy of Lilacs: Advancing the Southern Frontier*, in *Lilacs*, Volume 42, Number 1 Winter 2013. In cold climates the task is easier.

Many of our lilac cultivars don't mind the very cold weather. It was demonstrated at the Nancy Convention 2012 by Tatiana Poliakova. She showed us images of the most beautiful lilacs growing in Russia. What would be nice are lilacs growing in the oasis in the Sahara Desert. Who knows perhaps unknown to us there are lilacs growing in those micro climates. It seems that anywhere French Missionaries migrated in the world, lilacs have migrated with them. Lilacs in Israel by Boaz Greenfield tells the story of how lilacs found themselves in that country, confirming that people and lilacs travel well together.

ILS is doing fine. Sometimes it seems to be plodding along like a pachyderm and at others times leaping forward with the energy of a gazelle. Sturdy and composed is our society. As long as we keep with the subject at hand, Lilacs, we are

fine. Of course we must always go forward. Better communications and a good understanding of all our member needs should be a number one concern.

The web page has grown and is growing because of the continual attention given to it by Candace Wentz and our Executive Vice President, Bradley Bittorf. Soon the journal will be on line. We are working on a portal for "members only" to access it and access other publications securely.

Our membership is growing little by little. Thank you to William Tschumi, Assistant Treasurer, for handling the membership applications and renewals for so many years. What is easier getting new members or keeping them? We are competing with so many forms of entertainment. In the USA gardening is the second favorite form of recreation.

Presently the real boost in gardening is in growing vegetables locally. I run a farmer's market, now in its sixth year. It started out with a very few vendors and has now exploded to the point that vendors must be put on a waiting list. I have vendors who cultivate miniature gardens on balconies and others who raise their produce on small farms. In cities "Urban Gardeners/farmers" are being born. They all want to come to the markets. I have one gentleman who sold lilacs last year. They came from cuttings of a lilac his late parents had at their home. They had no name of course, but his customers were delighted to find lilacs at the market. He always sends them to me so I can 'talk lilacs' with them. The first question is 'when will it bloom'!

I would like to see miniature lilacs being developed. I'm talking very small ones to grow in containers on balconies. Some of you are familiar with mini-hostas, well how about mini-lilacs, not quite this small but smaller than what we have today on the market. Genetic engineering can certainly make it possible.

Professor Laura Jull, from the Department of Agriculture at the University of Wisconsin, USA and ILS Member will present a program entitled "Smaller Lilacs for our Smaller Gardens". Perhaps there are other scientists, horticulturists and amateurs who are working silently toward this goal.

Again in our winter journal 2013 the article *Syringa vulgaris* Genetic Resources Pilot Project in Finland opens a new avenue in the preservation of Lilacs. The DNA research by Dr. Elena Lyakh of Helsinki, Finland is very timely. That is a super project and a leap forward in the conservation of lilacs. To have Lilacs DNA research, complement the work of the ILS Preservation Committee, is perfect. Thank you to the authors for this very interesting article and their work.

Before I close I want to talk about volunteering. Our society, like others societies is in need of volunteers, members who step forward to make ideas and projects happen. It is not enough to have ideas but we need the men power to bring them to completion. For years now we have asked for an assistant editor, members to join the Preservation committee, help with the web page etc. Whowill step forward and offer to serve the International Lilac Society? I would like to see a strong youth chairman take charge and bring upbeat ideas to interest and attract young people into the society. We are not doing enough to "plant the lilac seed" into young minds. Who will take over the society in the future? The time to prepare is now! I think we need a big symposium next fall or winter as proposed by Bradley Bittorf, ILS Executive Vice President, to work on the society logistics and the 20/20 vision long range plan put forward by Frank Moro.

I will see you very soon in May at the convention in Madison, Wisconsin, USA if we can survive the brutal winter we are having in Northern America, Northern Europe, Canada and Northern Asia. I'm ready to see lilacs in bloom and all my ILS friends. Are YOU?

*Amities,
Nicole Jordan*

Rochester NY and Highland Park to Host Delegation from Novgorod, Russian Federation

Rochester, New York, USA is the sister city of Novgorod, Russian Federation.

This year a delegation is coming to Rochester in May; just in time
to view the lilacs that will be blooming in Highland Botanical Park.

Included in this delegation is Tatiana Poliakova and Natalia Balmysheva.

I am looking forward to meeting them and to giving them

a tour of our lilacs and arboretum.

Editor, Kent Millham
(and horticulturist at Highland Botanical Park)

Growing The Lilac Society

presentation by Paul Rogers

At the New England Fall meeting we were entertained by the most delightful gentleman, Mr. Paul Rogers. Paul, a horticulture/arboriculture consultant, educator, radio host and columnist, is one of those speakers who have a knack for keeping your attention. He's been around for years sharing his gardening expertise. I recently saw him referred to as "The Dean of Radio Garden Tips".

Paul, who's fascinated by all plants—not just lilacs, was trying to instill ideas on how to help our society grow. He urged everyone in the society (even those of us who know very little) to share our lilac expertise with reporters, radio hosts, TV personalities and others who will listen and help spread our message. One suggestion he had is to visit our local nurseries, especially during lilac season and be available to answer questions. His thinking is that most nurseries would love to have someone with expertise around to help their customers. If they don't have questions, supply them with some information. I thought a Q & A list would be a great membership recruiting tool to publish and have on our website. Below is the list of his suggested questions, along with some generic answers supplied by Jack Alexander. The list is meant to be a guideline and would need to be tweaked depending on your location and growing conditions. To read some of Paul's columns please see:

<http://www.telegram.com/article/20121125/COLUMN18/121129751/-1/column>.

- Why chose lilacs for planting?
 - Hardiness, fragrance, color, history...
- When is the best time of the year to plant them?
 - Early spring or late fall. Even in the early fall, because roots will grow in the fall, they have time to grow and get established before the big flush of top growth in the spring. Fall is my favorite time to plant lilacs.
- Are all varieties equally winter hardy?
 - No, some of the smaller leaved species and cultivars are less hardy. The operative word here is "some". Note that the Fairytale series is small leaved and hardy. 'Miss Kim' is hardy. As with other genera, the climate from which the parent plants come may influence the hardiness of the progeny. *S. vulgaris*, *×hyacinthiflora*, and the large leaved late flowering cultivars (esp. the prestons) are very hardy.
- What do I need to do to protect them over winter?
 - Nothing, unless they are in pots.
- Which variety if the most fragrant? By color, shape, by bloom time?
 - See: [http://arnoldia.arboretum.harvard.edu/pdf/articles/1996-56-1-](http://arnoldia.arboretum.harvard.edu/pdf/articles/1996-56-1-would-a-lilac-by-any-other-name-smell-so-sweet-a-search-for-fragrance.pdf)

would-a-

[lilac-by-any-other-name-smell-so-sweet-a-search-for-fragrance.pdf](http://arnoldia.arboretum.harvard.edu/pdf/articles/1996-56-1-would-a-lilac-by-any-other-name-smell-so-sweet-a-search-for-fragrance.pdf)

- Which variety blooms first?
 - o *S. oblata* and *×hyacinthiflora* including 'Hyacinthiflora Plena', 'Cheyenne', 'Birchwood', 'Evangeline', 'Gertrude Leslie'.
- Which variety stays in bloom the longest?
 - o It is very weather dependent.
- If I pick an early and a late bloomer, how long a flowering season will I enjoy?
 - o It is very weather dependent.
- Which lilacs are best for (select for your part of the country)?
 - o They all do well here (Boston region).
- Are there any types that tolerate shade?
 - o 'Miss Kim' is one of the best for shade.
- What fertilizer and when should I feed?
 - o Fertilizing need not be part of your standard cultural care. Have your soil tested, and if a need for fertilizer is indicated, apply it.
- When and how should I prune?
 - o Prune for shape, shape and rejuvenation. Prune immediately after flowering.
- Why do the leaves turn white?
 - o Usually powdery mildew which is aesthetically displeasing but not fatal.
- Where do I go for more information on selecting & culturing lilacs?
 - o ILS, of course.

*Submitted by
Karen McCauley*

Promoting Lilacs and Membership

The pleas in previous issues of *Lilacs* for increased membership prompted me to relate experiences and suggest possible solutions.

Last year a lady presented a huge beautiful dahlia to a restaurant I frequent. The diners clamored for its name, info on its care and where to obtain it. I was so impressed that I subsequently joined a local dahlia society myself.

Such an anecdote should teach us that we should promote the lilac aggressively and ubiquitously. We should offer advice in its planting and care, and induce others to thoroughly enjoy the lilac renaissance by joining the ILS.

Isn't time spent in regional meetings like preaching to the choir? Most are already members. Spend your time with the public, garden clubs and master gardeners. Spark enthusiasm in the public for lilacs, and then enlist them into ILS..

Every winter I force lilacs in small containers. I give them away, donate them to fundraisers instead of money, or use as them as cut flowers. It's easy to do. One fragrant blossom in a flower saver creates astonishing results in the off season.

Such enthusiasm and the novelty of off-season blooms leads to many requests for talks on lilacs. If you really love lilacs you should become involved at every opportunity. If you are reluctant to address a group (with one blooming in your hand?) perhaps you could team with someone who relishes the challenge, while you support them in a question and answer segment. I have developed a number of salespeople that way.

Another approach would be to engage a public relations firm to promote ILS and membership.

Also, why not consider contests and rewards for those who refer or enlist the most new members. A reward could be a free years membership, or a plaque or recognition at meetings and in the lilac quarterly.

Write me or call if you wish. I have a mere 60 years of experience in horticulture and promotion, and lilacs have been the most fun of all.

Ted Collins
Atlantic Region VP

Tree & Landscape Pioneer Ted Collins Honored by His Local Nursery & Landscape Association

Ted Collins was a pioneer in the tree and landscape business. His innovative ideas won his firm national acclaim, as well as recognition in his hometown of Rochester, New York.

Family, friends and former employees gathered on March 18 to honor Collins with a lifetime achievement award at the Gardenscape Professionals Association (Region 5 of the New York State Nursery & Landscape Association) spring membership meeting.

Now 83, Collins founded Ted Collins Tree & Landscape in 1957, while still working as an arborist at the famed Oak Hill Country Club. In the 1970's, Collins mounted an aggressive marketing program that was unheard of in the industry at that time. some elements of his marketing campaign included:

- Advertorials in local newspapers:
- Buying all of the advertising space on certain suburban commuter buses, hiring hostesses to serve coffee and donuts, and then riding those buses to answer customer questions:
- Converting his entire fleet to operate on propane and then heavily publicizing this environmental initiative.

The innovative tree and landscape contractor was invited to speak at many industry conferences and trade show. He shared with peers how he used marketing to build his business into the largest tree and landscape company in the Rochester area. during this period, he also spawned many other companies as employees took what they learned from Collins and started their own businesses.

Collins sold his business to an employee in 1991 and “retired” to his lilac nursery behind his home. Soon he became a vendor of lilac plants at Rochester’s annual Lilac Festival. this is where he gained the nickname Doc Lilac.

Lilac Hill Nursery is still thriving, thanks to Collins’ drive. His son and grandson are also very active in the business, selling up to 300 varieties of lilacs at the nursery and online (lilachillnursery.com).

With good humor, Gardenscape Pros President Jeff Hathorn incorporated a roast into the presentation, along with the accolades. Collins responded in kind by incorporating a poetic roast into his acceptance, proving that age is a state of mind.

Duane Pancoast
March 2013

International Lilac Month

*The International Lilac Society Board voted on February 25, 2013
to proclaim May as International Lilac Month.*

*The ideas comes from Frank Moro, Chairman of the Long-Range
Committee. He had first proposed an Annual Lilac Day in order to
promote lilacs and bring people together to promote
this wonderful shrub that we all love.*

The idea developed into an International Lilac Month.

Spread the word!

*Let all botanical gardens, garden centers, nurseries, family,
friends, etc. know that May is International Lilac Month!*

ILS Western Canada Report

Early spring in the Rockies of Western Canada always gets us into the gardening spirit. The geese and robins are arriving, the sun is shining and the snow is melting.

The Convention in Nancy was an experience to be remembered for years to come. That combined with a visit to a most interesting collection in England will be hard to beat.

Last lilac season was a great disappointment in the Robson Valley. Two consecutive weekends of flooding and road closures kept almost everyone away for our annual lilac walk. We did present the two local libraries with a copy of *Lilacs*, *The Gardener's Encyclopedia* so that every lilac lover in the valley can have access to information on lilacs.

In 2007 we visited the then defunct Federal Experimental Farm in Prince George, BC. We were given permission to take cuttings of the lilacs. These are now planted in a long alley on the Culp Farm. This year we should see some bloom although it will be interesting to try and guess who they are. Anyone travelling this way during lilac time would be welcome to help us identify them as we understand that they originally came from the Isabella Preston collection at the Ottawa Experimental Farm.

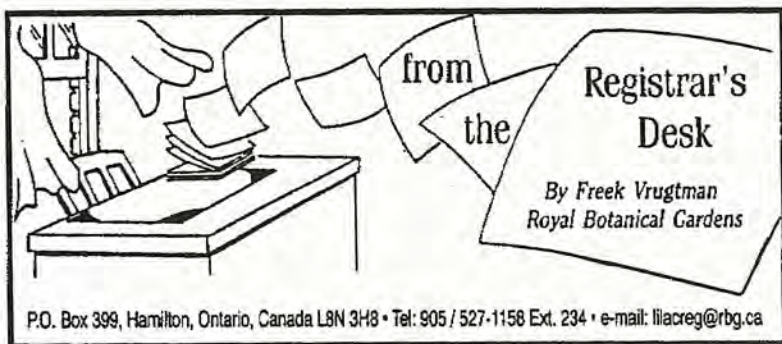
Looking through the seed catalogues and gardening journals, we are amazed at how much easier it is now for us to "shop" for that special lilac. When we look back on the past 20 years of serious collecting, at one time we were only able to order 'President Lincoln', 'Royalty', 'Alba Grandiflora', and the rest were called pink, purple or white. Having said that, we do live in a remote part of the country with few nurseries.

A correspondence between Bonnie Culp and Charles Holteich introduced us to Briggs Nursery in Washington. Their list was, to our limited experience, something heavenly. We ordered as many cultivars as we could afford. Then Frank Moro's list came in the mail, and once again it listed so many lilacs that we had a hard time making a decision. We wanted them all. Everywhere we travel, we always check out the lilac selections. Every lilac in our collections (we have 100+) tells a story of a trip taken, a lilac collection visited or a new found nursery. A rare lilac for our garden is always just waiting around the corner.

Linda Blackman

March 2013

Western Canada Regional VP



Joe Oppe, 1932-2012

Few ILS members will recognize the name of Joe Oppe, but Joe played a significant role, albeit in the background, when he assisted John Wister during John's last few years as International Lilac Registrar prior to the transfer of the ICRA for *Syringa* from the Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation at Swarthmore, PA, to Royal Botanical Gardens in 1975.

Joseph (Joe) W. Oppe was born on January 11, 1932, in Marietta, Ohio, and died in Parkersburg, West Virginia, on December 31, 2012.

Joe graduated from Marietta High School with the class of 1949. After serving in the Navy he continued his undergraduate education at Marietta College and received his master's degree in botany from the University of Idaho in 1959.

His career in public horticulture took him across the United States from Ohio to Colorado, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Kansas, Florida, Iowa, and finally back to the Mid Ohio Valley.

As a part of his career he was active in many related organizations. He served on advisory committees and boards and was named Honorary Life Member of The American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA), now known as the American Public Gardens Association (APGA).

manuscript for *Lilacs - Quarterly Journal*

[manuscript updated and mailed as .doc & .pdf February 20, 2013]

McKelvey's Monograph, a research tool

The starting point for cultivar and Group names in the genus *Syringa* is: McKelvey, Susan D. *The Lilac - a Monograph*

Published: 1928 (p. ix: July, 1928), front., p. [i]-xvi, [1]-581, pl. 1-171 (including front 172 pl.),

Macmillan, New York. Printed December 1928.

© Copyright No. 13178, Dec. 4, 1928, Macmillan Co. (Catalogue of copyright entries, Pt. 1, n. s., v. 25, p. 1969. Library of Congress Copyright Office.

Washington 1930).

The decision of designating McKelvey's Monograph the starting point for cultivar and Group names in *Syringa* was made by the Nomenclature Committee at the XII International Horticultural Congress, Berlin, Germany, 1936, and was subsequently endorsed by the ISHS Commission for Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration. (Congress Proceedings 1:459-460 and 2:1515-1516; 1939).

McKelvey's Monograph is still protected by copyright, hence reprinting has not been possible.

A copy of McKelvey's Monograph is with the International Lilac Registrar. It was presented by Margaret Hutchinson to Charles Holetich about 1986/87 in behalf of her late husband Trevor Hutchinson, to be placed "in the Registrar's Library". Trevor Hutchinson was a member of the International Lilac Society.

Through cooperation of Royal Botanical Gardens and the curator of collections PDF scans have been made of key sections of McKelvey's Monograph, namely,

- the Preface by S. D. McKelvey (pp. vii-ix),
- the Contents page (p. xi),
- the Description of the genus and its sections with a key to the species by Alfred Rehder (pp. 9-14),
- the Index of names (pp.567-581), and
- the "Four Charts of selected colors conforming to Robert Ridgway's Color Standards and Color Nomenclature", which accompany the Monograph. It should be kept in mind that these color charts were printed 95 years ago, and that the color reproduction on computer monitors may not accurately represent the original colors.

Of the 597 pages of the Monograph 29 pages or about 5% were scanned, which is well within the limits allowed by copyright legislation.

Rehder's classification of the genus *Syringa*, and the index of names of McKelvey's Monograph are useful tools when researching lilac nomenclature and its history. Copies of the Monograph can be found in major botanical and horticultural libraries; a number of ILS members also own copies. To researchers who have no easy access to the Monograph, the scans, described above, can be made available for personal use.

Contribution No. 207, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

LATVIAN LILACS ORIGINATED BY LAIMONIS KARKLINS

*I look upon the world as a lover
Dizzy with a dream about lilac clusters!
Igor Severyanin, Russian poet*

This paper deals with several cultivars of double (polypetalous) and single-flowered lilacs selected by Laimonis Karklins (1923-2005), a prominent Latvian agronomist. He came from the family of a well-to-do farmer in independent Latvia and from childhood dreamt of laying out a fruit garden at his father's farm. However, this dream was not to come true. As many young men of his generation here in Baltic countries, he went through the war, captivity and Gulag. After returning to Latvia, in the beginning of the 1950s young Karklins took on a job in Riga Trees and Gardens Trust. Here, he made good use of knowledge gained earlier in Gardening and Beekeeping Technical School.

Karklins became interested in lilacs and enthusiastically started their selection. While looking after lilac shrubs plentiful in the Latvian capital, he gathered the seeds from the specimens he liked most. These seeds were subsequently sown in his father's garden; thus, the first seedlings were obtained. As a result of painstaking efforts, Karklins discovered among the young plants two particularly valuable dwarf hybrids: one of them with white double (polypetalous) flowers (cv. 'Albīns') and the other with large purple single flowers and long inflorescences (cv. 'Santa').

Later, in the mid-1960s, he offered his lilacs to be registered as cultivars, and they were highly appreciated by the experts from Botanical Garden of Latvian Academy of Sciences in Salaspils. As a result of tests, these lilacs gained 94–96 points out of 100 possible. Subsequent methodical selection the breeder conducted in the town Kegums on the river Daugava in his tiny private garden. On a small experimental plot, he accommodated only four cultivars: reliable single-flowered purple cv. 'Andenken an Ludwig Späth', magnificent double (polypetalous) pink cv. 'Katherine Havemeyer', and two dwarf lilacs of his own selection. Cvs. 'Albīns' and 'Santa' were used in breeding as parent plants.

Karklins obtained seeds produced as a result of free pollination of these cultivars, and conducted routine selection of promising seedlings in the early stages of their development by the first pair of true leaves. This approach he had mastered before and having a remarkable power of observation applied it again. Some fully grown seedlings were left to be used as stock plants, and the best were used in subsequent hybridization for production of more new forms. As a result of their cross-pollination, the breeder obtained several groups of original hybrids comprising dwarf forms. Selection aimed to breed compact shrubs designed for small gardens of amateur flower-growers, and this objective was

achieved. Karklins managed to produce several groups of medium, small, semi-dwarf, and even dwarf hybrids with single and double (polypetalous) flowers and multicolored fragrant inflorescences.

It is natural that lilac cultivars produced by Karklins should show some features of original parent forms. First of all, it concerns habitus of the shrubs and coloration of their buds and flowers (with domination of rich purple shades). Let us dwell on the features evident immediately after a quick examination of this remarkable collection. The lilacs described below are currently cultivated in *Latvia State Institute of Fruit Growing* in the town of Dobeles.

The shrubs are of medium height or short (from 1.5 to 2.5 m), compact and loose. They have semidwarf (shorter than 1.5 m) and even one dwarf form (the height of no more than 40—50 cm).

In the majority of double (polypetalous) cultivars, V-shaped inflorescences consist of only one pair of panicles and resemble a *furca* (tuning-fork). In less numerous group of actively flowering cultivars, inflorescences consist of 2—4 (up to 6) pairs of panicles and look like bouquets (*synflorescences*). The panicles of some double (polypetalous) cultivars show morphological heterogeneity. Voluminous floral panicles are located on the tops of shrubs. In lower storeys, the panicles are narrow and thin. They include small leaf blades (inflorescence of *bracteous type*). And finally, sometimes we find unusual shoots with developed middle leaves whose axils carry tiny floral racemes. In such *frondiferous shoots*, the flowers are sometimes diminutive.

Inflorescences of double (polypetalous) forms have compound (as a rule, *trichromatic*) coloration: purple buds of different shades and violet-burgundy flowers with pale inner corollas. Double (polypetalous) flowers consist of three closed or slightly open corollas and when half-open they have a characteristic whitish lock (still closed inner corolla). In the stage of full blooming, the lock opens to produce a corolla with narrow petals. The anthers on the stamens become visible. In some cultivars, outer bud corolla is distinctly detached from two inner corollas and looks like a cuff. Inflorescences of single-flowered forms often have rich purple and sometimes violet-rose coloration.

In 2010 and 2011, some buds of flower shoots of both double (polypetalous) and single-flowered lilacs produced conjugate green renewal shoots that were often longer than the panicles of inflorescences. As a result, inflorescences were screened by them. It is not known how this feature characteristic of tall shrubs correlates with their evident compactness. This issue requires more observations and consideration. Karklins's lilacs usually have rather strong and pleasant fragrance.

-- Dr. **Igor Semenov** (Moscow, Russia), Dr. **Sarmite Strautina** (Dobele, Latvia)



Syringa vulgaris 'Albīns'

Photo submitted by Tatiana Poliakova



Syringa vulgaris 'Santa'

Photo submitted by Tatiana Poliakova

Lilacs from the University of New Hampshire

The University of New Hampshire in Durham was a center of lilac breeding for over 60 years, from the 1940's through the early 2000's. Seven of the ten cultivars produced by UNH are of the Villosae Group, a later blooming lilac than the traditional *Syringa vulgaris*. These cultivars were chosen for their late blooming habit, in the hope that the late bloom time would escape the early frosts so common in New Hampshire's variable spring weather.

Three principal scientists were engaged in this work, Albert Franklin Yeager (1892 – 1961), Elwyn Marshall Meader (1910 -1996), and Owen Maurice Rogers, Ph.D.(contemporary).

In addition to lilacs, Albert Yeager introduced the NH Midget watermelon and the Buttercup squash. After his retirement from UNH in 1959, Professor Yeager continued his work developing plants with Henry A. Wallace, 33rd Vice President of the United States in the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration (1941-1945) and a former US Secretary of Agriculture (1933-1940) and Commerce (1945-1946).

Rochester, NH, native Elwyn Meader is without question one of the most famous plant breeders in world history, though his name is not well known outside of horticultural circles. He introduced many new cultivars of cold hardy vegetables and fruits, including the Reliance peach, the Royalty bean, cold hardy Chrysanthemums, and a type of self -pollinating cucumber that revolutionized the pickling industry. All commercial pickles that we consume today are the result of his breeding work.

Owen Rogers introduced 3 lilacs of the Villosae Group, in addition to teaching classes in plant genetics and breeding, judging flower shows, and serving in the United States Air Force Reserve for 20 years, retiring with the rank of Major. Dr. Rogers was the unofficial spokesman for lilacs in New Hampshire for many years, active well past his retirement in 1996, appearing in magazine articles and on television to promote lilacs.

These men introduced 10 lilacs to the nursery trade. 'Miss Kim' and 'James Macfarlane' are two of the most widely planted lilacs in the United States, but some of the UNH lilacs are very rare, even endangered, a twist of modern horticulture. Luckily, a renewed interest in the cultivars introduced by UNH has allowed for propagation of the rarest ones, hopefully ensuring their survival for the enjoyment of lilac lovers in New Hampshire and throughout the world.

Ten Lilac Cultivars introduced by the University of New Hampshire from 1945 through 2013:

'Agnes Smith' *Syringa* (Villosae Group)

Originated by Owen Rogers in 1970; florets single, white (Wister Code: S I). Named for Agnes Greene Smith [1883-1969], of Portsmouth, NH, the 1st President of the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs. Mrs. Smith was the wife of Harold M. Smith, Speaker of the NH House of Representatives 1931-1933.

'Anna Amhoff' *S.* (Villosae Group), *S. xjosiflexa*

Originated by Albert Yeager in 1961; florets single, white (Wister Code: S I). Named for Mrs. Anna Evans Amhoff [- 1951] active member and flower show judge of the Portsmouth Garden Club in Portsmouth, NH, where she served as president for 12 years.

'Anne Tighe' *S. vulgaris*

Introduced by Albert Yeager in 1945; florets double, purple. (Wister Code: D VII).

Named for Mrs. Anne E. Sullivan Tighe [1884-1945], a teacher and charter member of the Community Garden Club in Salmon Falls, New Hampshire, of which she served as president for 7 years. She was also a charter member of the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs and served on its executive board. Mrs. Tighe is buried in the Rollinsford Cemetery, Rollinsford, NH.

'James Macfarlane' *S.* (Villosae Group), *S. xjosiflexa*

Another Albert Yeager introduction from 1959; florets single, pink. (Wister Code: S V). Named for James Macfarlane [1864-1950], of Rochester, NH, horticulturist at the University of New Hampshire from 1915-1949. Mr. Macfarlane was born in London, England, and immigrated to the United States in 1893. He studied at Cornell, and in 1915, came to UNH, where he operated the greenhouses, giving tours and teaching classes in horticulture until the age of 85. He is known as the Father of the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs. Mr. Macfarlane retired to Wolfeboro, NH, and is buried in the Lakeview Cemetery.

'Jesse Hepler' *S.* (Villosae Group), *S. xjosiflexa*

Introduced by Owen Rogers in 1978; florets single, purple. (Wister Code: S VII). Named for Jesse Raymond Hepler [1887 - 1962], professor of horticulture from 1917-1956, at the University of New Hampshire. From 1940 through 1980, UNH was home to the Jesse Hepler Lilac Arboretum, located behind Thompson Hall. It was taken out in 1980. For thirty years, Professor Hepler was known as the Granite State Gardener, writing a weekly column in the Portsmouth Herald, entitled Home Gardener. He was also the first in the UNH Extension office to use radio and television to reach his audience. Professor Hepler developed an eggplant that was widely planted in New Hampshire, as well as the Merrimack

Wonder pepper and the Flash shell bean. He had a collection of over 400 heirloom beans, displayed in glass jars, which was one of the largest in the United States at one time. The original plant introduced by Dr. Rogers is still alive in 2013 and can be seen at the Woodman Farm at UNH in Durham, NH. 'Jesse Hepler' is the latest blooming lilac of the UNH introductions, and the latest blooming lilac in the Villosae Group in the New England area.

'Marie Rogers' *S.* (Villosae Group)

Introduced by Owen Rogers and Walter Oakes [1928 – 2005], of Dixfield, Maine in 2003; florets double, violet. (Wister Code: D II).

This lilac was named by Walter Oakes for Marie Rogers, wife of Owen M. Rogers, professor at UNH, and the plant's originator. Mrs. Rogers met Owen while they were both in the United States Air Force. In 1951-52, working as a recruiter for the Air Force before she met Owen, she was stationed in Rochester, New York, home of the Rochester Parks Lilac Collection. Walter Oakes was a founding member of the International Lilac Society, and selected the plant from a batch of open pollinated seedlings received from Owen Rogers in 1992.

'Mary Blanchard' *S. vulgaris*

Introduced by Albert Yeager in 1958; florets single, violet. (Wister Code: S II).

This cultivar is named for Mary Fisher Blanchard [1894-1953], amateur gardener and lilac grower, and an active member and president of the Milford Garden Club, Milford, NH. Mrs. Blanchard is buried in the Meeting House Hill cemetery in New Boston, NH. No specimens of this cultivar have been located by the author.

'Maybelle Farnum', *S.* (Villosae Group), *S. ×josiflexa*

Originated by Albert Yeager in 1961; florets single, violet (Wister Code: S VII).

This lilac is named for Maybelle W. Farnum [1879-1953], an active member of garden clubs and promoter of lilacs in Rhode Island and New Hampshire. Mrs. Farnum was a member of the Barrington Garden Club in the early part of her life, and upon moving to Tamworth, NH, in 1938, became the first president of the Tamworth Garden Club, and planted a lilac hedge near the Congregational Church in Tamworth, NH, which is still there.

'Miss Kim', *S. pubescens* subsp. *patula*

An introduction by Elwyn Meader & Albert Yeager in 1954; florets single, violet. (Wister Code: S II).

'Miss Kim' was grown from one of only 12 seeds collected by Professor Meader in the Pouk Han mountain area of South Korea on Veteran's Day, November 11, 1947. Professor Meader was stationed in Seoul, (now South) Korea, where he served as a horticulturist with the U.S. Army Military Government. It was named for all of the beautiful Korean women, a generic and common name of Kim being chosen.

'Nellie Bean' *S.* (Villosae Group), *S. xjosiflexa*

Introduced by Albert Yeager in 1959; florets single, purple. (Wister Code: S VII). Nellie Cunningham Bean [1869-1945], was a charter member, and in 1936, became the third president of the Franklin Garden Club, Franklin, NH. She loved wildflowers and was a judge at area flower shows in the first part of the 20th century. Mr. Yeager honored Mrs. Bean by naming a lilac in her honor, 14 years after her death. Mrs. Bean is buried in the Proctor Cemetery in Andover, NH.

If you have information about the lilacs noted above, or about the people associated with them, please contact the author at katiebentleylilacproject@gmail.com, or PO Box 269, Salisbury, NH, 03268, United States, or by phone, 603-783-6779 or 603-648-2676.

John Bentley, Salisbury, NH
April, 2013

The Lilac Cultivars of Richard A. Fenicchia

I was very fortunate to start my career when Richard Fenicchia was still the Superintendent of Horticulture at Highland Botanical Park. Much of my early years were spent working at the testing grounds at Smith Road Nursery, where Dick was testing many of his new outstanding lilac cultivars. I had earned a Bachelors of Science Degree from Cornell University in Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture, but little did I know that I would be working for one of the great plantsman of the 20th century, and that my horticultural education was only just beginning.

Working in an arboretum that has over 500 cultivars of lilacs, I learned to appreciate the differences between different cultivars, and discovered that many of Dick's cultivars displayed many outstanding traits that make them stand out from other cultivars. Mr. Fenicchia's success in hybridizing in lilacs was largely due to his use of 'Rochester' as a parent in many, if not all, of his lilac hybridizations. The well-known radial doubling trait of 'Rochester' is not always passed on its progeny, but frequently it is. Fenicchia has about 20 cultivars registered, and radial doubling, large florets, "mother-of-pearl" flower color effects, and extra-large inflorescences are some of the outstanding traits found in his hybrids.

Fenicchia selections:

'Alvan R. Grant', single purple, 'Rochester' × 'Madame Charles Souchet', 1995. This cultivar was named for the former Director of Monroe County Parks who also sowed the seeds of 'Edith Cavell' that produced 'Rochester'; one of the most outstanding lilacs ever developed.

'Bernard Slavin', single white, 'Rochester' × ?, 1996

Barney Slavin was the second great plantsman of Highland Park, and was one of Dick's first mentors. This cultivar has large white florets, and can be a strong, upright grower to about 10' tall with fairly large inflorescences.

'Bicentennial', single bluish, 'Rochester' × 'Dusk', 1988

Rare cultivar that is slow growing with short growth habit

'Blue Diamond', single blue, 'Rochester' × 'Madame Charles Souchet', 1997

Another rare cultivar, this lilac displays radial doubling, with some florets larger than a quarter.

'Charles Lindbergh', single violet to bluish, Rochester × 'Madame Charles Souchet', 1988

This lilac can be vigorous and tall, growing 12 to 15' tall, and just as wide. It also responds well to pruning.

'Dwight D. Eisenhower', single blue, 'Rochester' × ?, 1969

One of the greatest of Fenicchia's hybrid lilacs, it is an extremely vigorous cultivar, growing up to 12-15' tall. The color is an outstanding sky blue, and displays radial doubling on many florets. The inflorescences are huge; up to 1.5' in height. It is named after the 34th president of the USA, and one was planted at the White House.

'Flower City', single violet to violet-purple, 'Rochester' × 'Madame Charles Souchet', 1983

Father John Fiala considered this one of Dick Fenicchia's finest hybrids. It displays single violet blooms with radial doubling, and the cup-shaped florets also reveal a showy silvery reverse side. Usually it is an upright grower, and can show vigorous growth after pruning or damage. A 'Flower City' at Highland Park, after severe winter storm damage, has resprouted with much strong new growth. Named after Rochester, New York, which is often referred to now as the flower city.

'Frederick Douglass', semidouble blue, 1996

The florets are unusual with twisted, semi-double florets. It is a weak grower, and short-lived. It is named after the famous 19th century abolitionist, who also at one time lived in Rochester, New York.

'Frederick Law Olmsted', single white, 'Rochester' × 'Rochester', 1988

Although individual florets are small and don't display any radial doubling, this is one of my favorite cultivars. It is a reliable bloomer every year, and is very recognizable from a distance because of its floriferous display, and rounded growth habit. It is extremely easy to propagate from softwood cuttings, with 100% success rate often achieved. It is named after the famed landscape archi-

tect Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed the general layout of Highland Park, along with several other parks in the Monroe County Park System, and approximately 500 parks worldwide.

'George Eastman', single pink to magenta, 1978, *Syringa pubescens* subsp. *julianae*

Discovered growing as a seedling in Durand-Eastman Park, another arboretum in the Monroe County Park system, by Fenicchia. This cultivar has a deeper, richer color than the subspecies.

'Independence', single white, 'Rochester × ?', 1988,

A very beautiful, showy white. Prettiest blooms of the white Fenicchia selections.

'John Dunbar', single, violet, 'Rochester × ?',

This selection is named after the original horticulturist at Highland Park who selected over 30 cultivars of lilacs. Some of his best selections, which are still available in the nursery trade today, are 'President Lincoln', 'General Sherman', and 'Adelaide Dunbar'.

'Margaret Fenicchia', single magenta, 'Rochester × ?', 1997

This cultivar has very large individual florets that are somewhat cup-shaped. He named it after his beloved wife Margaret. In the first edition of Lilacs: The Genus *Syringa*, Father John Fiala considers this one of Dick's finest lilacs. At the time of the book's printing, it was unnamed. It is referred to in Plate 78 as #1825, the location number of it in the Highland Botanical Park arboretum, and the photo shows the deep rich color.

'Maggie Brooks', single violet, Fenicchia and Millham, 2011

The florets on this lilac are large, up to ¾" in width, and violet to lilac in color, and the growth is somewhat upright. Named to honor the current Monroe County executive.

'Martha Stewart', single blue, 'Rochester × ?', 1995

Has beautiful sky-blue florets, and is a slow-growing shrub that remains fairly small. Named after the tv personality, who came to visit Highland Park in 2007, and visited her namesake lilac. This displays darker and lighter shades of blue on petals.

'Richard A. Fenicchia', double purple to violet, 1997

I consider this one of the best double purple selections of lilacs with its unusual star-shaped florets. It is a very rare lilac that should be grown in the nursery trade. It would be a great addition to any lilac lover's lilac collection.

‘Sesquicentennial’, single lilac, ‘Rochester’ × ‘Glory’, 1972

Named in honor of the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Monroe County, this displays radial doubling on some of the florets; with some individual flowers attaining quarter to half dollar size. The inflorescences are huge, up to a foot and a half in length. It is an upright grower.

Extinct Cultivars:

‘Dr. Edward Mott Moore’, single violet, 1972

This cultivar displayed the multipetaling often found in many of Dick’s selections, and Father John Fiala considered this one of the best lilacs in the violet class. It was named after a famous American surgeon, who also became known as the “Father of Rochester Parks”, and was the first president of the Rochester Park Commission.

‘George Ellwanger’, single purple, ‘Rochester × ?’, 1972

This cultivar displayed radial doubling, and was named to honor George Ellwanger of Ellwanger and Barry Nursery. This nursery donated the land that became the site of world-famous Highland Park, and also donated many of the original plants.

These two cultivars are believed extinct, but if anyone thinks they know of the existence of a specimen, please contact Kent Millham, kmillham@monroecounty.gov.

Kent Millham
April 2013

(Photo Credit for all following photos to Kent Millham)



Syringa vulgaris ‘Bernard Slavin’



Syringa vulgaris 'Bicentennial'
Note the lighter center of the florets



Syringa vulgaris 'Bishop McQuaid'



Syringa vulgaris 'Dwight D. Eisenhower'



Note the large floret and radial doubling
on 'Dwight D. Eisenhower'



Syringa vulgaris 'Flower City'



Syringa vulgaris 'Frederick Douglass'



Syringa vulgaris 'Frederick Law Olmsted'

This photo is 6 years old.

Shane Millham is a 17 year old now!



close up of 'Frederick Law Olmsted'



Syringa pubescens subsp. *julianae* 'George Eastman'



closeup of 'George Eastman'



Syringa vulgaris 'Independence'



Syringa vulgaris 'John Dunbar'



Syringa vulgaris 'Margaret Fenicchia'



Syringa vulgaris 'Martha Stewart'



Syringa vulgaris 'Sesquicentennial'



huge radially doubled floret of 'Sesquicentennial'



Syringa vulgaris 'Maggie Brooks'



Syringa vulgaris 'Richard A. Fenicchia'

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Syringa pubescens subsp. *patula* 'Miss Kim'

Photo Credit Dr.Zelimir Borzan



Syringa $\times$ *josiflexa* 'James Macfarlane'

Photo Credit Kent Millham



Syringa × *josiflexa* 'Agnes Smith'

Notice the attractive pinkish buds that open to pure white

Photo Credit Tatiana Poliakova