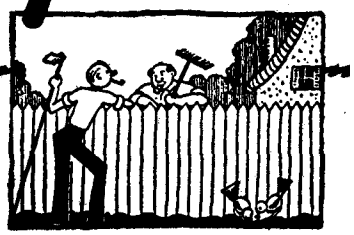
The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

Member--Men's Garden Clubs of America · Minnesota State Horticultural Society



February, 1954
Volume 12, Number 2
G. "Vic" Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors:
Don Methven, Wm. Hull,
N. W. Christopherson,
Joe Witmer

FEBRUARY MEETING

Date: Tuesday, February 9

Place: Hasty Tasty Cafe,
50th & France South

Time: 5:45 P.M. Sharp

Dinner: $1.75

P R O G R A M

1. Garden Design and Alpine Plants, Felix Dhainen, Park Board Landscape Architect.
2. Rock Gardens and Alpine Plants, Vic Lowrie - Ed Montgomery
3. House Plants: Which, why, how? Joe Witmer - Dr. Leon Snyder* (Interesting specimens on display)

* Dr. Snyder will distribute and discuss the excellent new U of M bulletin on house plants.

Officers

A. H. Flack	President
A. W. Koester	Vice-President
P. W. Young	Secretary
O. H. Erickson	Treasurer
R. J. Dufourd	Past-President

Office of the Secretary
and Speakers' Bureau
P. W. Young
4544 Beard Ave. South

Office of Exchange Editor
G. Victor Lowrie
417 Essex Building

Here is a three-star program you won't want to miss - packed full of the very things you have under consideration for your 1954 garden. There will be ample opportunity to ask questions as well as conveying your own experiences on the subjects to be presented. So come prepared with your own spring garden plans in mind - maybe you'll pick up an idea or two you've been searching for. In any event you can look forward to another enjoyable evening with the gang. Let's make it a date Tuesday, February 9 - 5:45 P.M.

WELCOME, TWO NEW MEMBERS . . . We are delighted in announcing the return of Wally Rowell to the club as a professional member. Wally, as most of you will remember, was a lily grower of considerable reputation and therefore brin to us a wide experience in lily culture. Another new member and an accomplish

JANUARY MEETING

Nowhere, no how, no place could gardening friends spend so enjoyable or so profitable a three hours as did approximately fifty of our members at the January meeting. It was full of interest from start to finish, thanks to Bob Adams and his program committee, together with many participants including Archie Flack, Tom Hughes, "P.W." Young, "O.P." Gustafson, Harold Kaufmann, Doc Stillman, Tony Koester, Joe Witmer, Walter Menzel, Arnie Brastad, Walter Quist, Cortis Rice, Lloyd Bachman and Herb Kahlert.

Following the reading of the annual reports by the secretary, the treasurer, the auditing committee, the special interest groups – all of which were unanimously approved as read – Archie Flack, acting as chairman of the retiring officers (Rene Dufourd having already fled from Minnesota's icy breezes) succeeded himself as chairman and president, at which point our 1954 officers took over.

First on the gardening end of the program for the evening appeared L. L. (Doc) Stillman, who spoke ably and well on "Greenhouse Culture." (His talk appears elsewhere in this issue of The Spray.) Harold Kaufmann, in his capacity as chairman of the Special Interest Leaders' Group, then called on other members who garden with the aid of greenhouses to give their experiences.

Unfortunately, Fred Paul, who had been scheduled to give a paper on "Fluorescent Gardening" was down with pneumonia (we are pleased to report that he is up and around again now), so pinch-hitter Harold Kaufmann led off the discussion based on his own quite broad experience with fluorescent lighting, and a lively debate ensued.

The greenhouse boys certainly did a thorough job of trying to sell us on erecting greenhouses. They would have us gardening all twelve months of the year, some even going so far as to suggest that we forfeit our vacations in order to attend properly the delicate flora being cultured under glass. However, since none could agree on the size of the required investment for a suitable greenhouse, nor tip the scales in favor of the advantages in operating a greenhouse over the disadvantages which appear to be quite numerous, it was quite evident from the tall talk overheard after the meeting, that the fluorescent crowd won out, with most of us being content with six months of outdoor gardening plus a few weeks in the basement struggling under fluorescent lights.

WANTED!

A well-started cutting of a climbing ivy-leafed geranium (Pelargonium). The completely double apple blossom colored flowers preferred. My original plant came from Jim Christman. An early frost killed my stock. I will be glad to exchange for one of my "Jacobinias."

Walter Menzel

We mourn the sudden passing of our good friend and fellow member, Russell Bechtel. Russ was a good gardener and an enthusiastic member. Our profound sympathy goes to the entire Bechtel family.

NEWS AND VIEWS

If you are troubled with seedlings damping off (which usually happens when grown in a poorly ventilated basement), "P.W." Young strongly recommends "Wilson's Anti-Damp." "It does the trick," writes P.W. "I soak the flats thoroughly after seeding and follow once a week with a fog spray until ready to transplant. Have two hundred pansy plants making second leaves and have not lost a single seedling. Follow same procedures after transplanting."

* * * *

Were you not impressed with our new fancy membership cards? Looks like in our twelfth year we have finally graduated to fully accredited membership of one kind or another. And by the way, no membership card, no name on the 1954 roster, if your 1954 dues have not been paid by the close of the February meeting.

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From Canada comes a report that the University of Alberta may have developed an antifreeze for plants. (If true, wouldn't the dahlia growers among our membership be jubilant?) Spraying parsnips with an acid similar to the weed killer 2,4,5-T, the plants survived temperatures of 7° below freezing without a trace of frost damage, while unsprayed parsnips blackened by the same freeze. Further experiments are being made to see whether other plants can also be protected.

* * * *

Seems like we have enough trouble in our spelling of the more simple words without science pyramiding letter upon letter in the naming of new chemicals. The University of Rhode Island has turned up with three effective control chemicals for combating nematodes. They are heptachlor 2E; 3-p-chlorophenyl-5-methyl rhodanine; and hexachlorocyclopentadiene - Sneeze it!

* * * *

The 1953 U.S. Department of Agriculture Year Book is entitled "Plant Diseases." A 992-page volume. Among other agricultural products it covers diseases of grasses, vegetables and some ornamentals. Price is $2.50; send check to Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

* * * *

We were honored to have Charlie Wolfe, an officer of the Men's Garden Club of Richfield, visit us last month as a guest of Herb Kahlert. Under the able guidance of Herb, the Richfield club has developed into a strong, vibrant organization. Guests are always most welcome at our monthly meetings.

* * * *

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has recently announced a new thornless raspberry named CANBY. Developed at the Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station, this new mid-season variety produces bright, medium-light berries, rated superior to other commercial varieties in ability to retain color, firmness and texture in storage and freezing.

* * * *

Here is a record we will challenge any Men's Garden Club membership to equal! Glen Cerney, while vacationing in California, absented himself from the January meeting and thereby missed attendi his first regular meeting of the club in 10 years. Congratulations, Glen. We missed you. May your sojourn in sunny California be a mighty pleasant one!

* * * *

Herb Kahlert remarked the other day that if you really want to garden unde glass, talk to Leonard Bies and he'll tell you how this can be accomplished with an expenditure of between $15 and $20. Now don't be too optimistic; you'll probably have to have just the right kind of basement, exposed in the proper direction, with all appurtenanc just where they should be.

* * * *

The 1954 All American rose selections are: Mojave, a hybrid tea, copper orange in color, about 25 petals on plants of medium height having heavy leathery foliage. Lilibet, a floribun

color soft pink with delicate fragrance; plants broad and bushy about 2-1/2 feet high.

* * * *

Delegates to the Denver M.G.C.A. convention June 8 through 11 must be selected 30 days before the convention date. This means by May 8th! Each club is allowed two delegates with two alternates. Members interested in an early summer vacation would do well to plan on spending these four days in Denver. Colorado is at its best in June. You'll never forget a holiday spent in Colorado!

GREENHOUSE GARDENING

By "Doc" Stillman

If you are happy gardening, why not be twice as happy and do it 12 months of the year? It's really fun to double your results and have the beauty and fragrance of flowers in bloom while it's freezing and bleak out-of-doors. You can raise husky seedlings in large quantities for setting out in the garden each spring, or multiply shrubs from cuttings to beautify the grounds around your home. These are only a few of the advantages that are yours when you have a greenhouse.

A winter garden can do much for you. First of all, there is the escape from the daily grind at a time when you need it most because the winter time can be quite depressing in Minnesota. "Nerves" disappear like magic after a few minutes in a garden under glass.

There are, however, disadvantages to a greenhouse. They are few, though, and I'll skip over them hurriedly. (1) You cannot grow everything under glass unless you have two or three different sections in your greenhouse running with different minimum night temperatures. If your specialty is going to be orchids, you cannot raise snaps or mums successfully. Different plants have different temperature requirements to do their best. (2) You are tied down as you would be by a small baby because one can't get away in the winter without making arrangements for checking on the heating system, watering, etc. But who wants to go south for a month in the winter when you have all the advantages of the southland in your own greenhouse? (3) Investment. We don't stop fishing just because each wall-eye or bass ends up costing about $4.50 a pound. This is a hobby, so you can't be realistic about it!

Enough of that! Let's get to the brighter side and the advantages. Under glass, flowers and plants thrive better than you ever thought possible. All the essentials of healthy plant life are under your command! Light, heat, fresh air, moisture, nourishment, drainage and controlled soil. Under these conditions you will grow things you never would attempt outside, and each new variety will suggest another.

A greenhouse garden requires a lot less physical work than out-of-doors. Weeds, insects and storms are no bother. No stoop, no squat, no squint! Everything is within easy reach. Don't be a willing slave to your hobby only six months of the year - go on a full-time basis. Mark Antony didn't mind it with Cleopatra, the Flower of the Nile!

THE SECRETARY'S 1953 ANNUAL REPORT

The twelfth year of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is now history. It was another busy year and a favorable one for our gardeners. Its close finds the club in a strong and healthy condition membershipwise, as well as financially. Eleven membership meetings were held during 1953, including the annual auction in May, the July and August garden tours, and the Christmas party. The attendance of active members averaged slightly over 59%, with a high of 84% at the auction meeting and a low of 45% at the February meeting held during the aftermath of a severe snowstorm. The Christmas party with 134 members and guests present set an all-time high.

Seven active members can boast of perfect attendance, namely, Cerney, Elieff, Harkins, Kahlert, Koester, Paul and Young. The following new active members were admitted during the year: F. E. Benson, Arnold P. Brastad, Albert E. Coxe, E. B. Haedecke, E. A. Hoyme, Charles Lampright, O. L. Lee and Herbert H. Stevens. New professional members included: Felix K. Dhainen, a former member, Louis R. Fischer, Sam Hunegs, and Charles R. Okken.

With deep sorrow we record the death of our friend and Charter member, T. D. Hughes, who passed away December 12. Mr. Hughes served as the club's first president in 1942.

Currently the roster reflects 75 active members, 10 associate members, 20 professional members, and one honorary member - Prof. L. E. Longley - a total of 106. Three applicants are on the waiting list.

Members receiving special honors during this year include: Herbert Kahlert, retiring secretary of M.G.C.A., presented with a resolution of appreciation for his faithful service and ability; Charles E. Doell was named General Chairman of the American Rose Society's annual convention; Greg Lucking was entrusted with the chairmanship of the National Rose Show; Dr. Leon C. Snyder was appointed Head of the Department of Horticulture at the U. of Minn. and also was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in the Minnesota State Horticultural Society; Cortis N. Rice, Jr., was elected vice-president of the Society and Charles R. Okker a director; George Luxton was twice honored, first by Lehman Gardens at Faribault where one of its best new mums was named after him, and again at the Annual Chrysanthemum Show of the Minneapolis Park Board which set aside a special "George Luxton Day." He was greeted by thousands of his friends. Our own club presented the 1953 M.G.C.A.Bronze Medal Award to Glen G. Cerney for his outstanding loyalty and service to the club.

Volume 11 of The Garden Spray contained 12 issues of helpful gardening information. As most of the activities of the club during its 12th year have been chronicled in The Spray, the balance of this report is devoted to other matters with which members are less familiar.

Our Historian, Fred Paul, has announced that his work in compiling a history of the club is now up to date and ready for publication in forthcoming issues of The Spray. Our Speakers' Bureau and slide library were in popular demand during the year. The Speakers' Bureau would welcome some new voices, and the library is in urgent need of new and interesting slides.

The Special Interest Groups continued their activities but these were chiefly carried on by a few of the leaders. Plans are now under way to reorganize and revitalize these groups to get broader participation. The club now has an even $1,000 in its savings account. This has been our goal for many years and we hope the fund will continue to grow and become the cornerstone for some future worthwhile civic project. A balance of $108.40 remains in the Special Tenth Anniversary Project Account. This cash is impounded for furtherance of the project. Incidentally, the crabapple trees are thriving and we are grateful to the Park Board for their winter protection.

In closing permit me to thank you for the privilege of serving as your secretary. I most deeply appreciate the opportunity it afforded to learn the inner workings of the club, the willingness of the members to co-operate and accept responsibility with the prestige of the club always uppermost in mind, and the many kindnesses our members quietly perform for one another, ranging from the sharing of prize plants and horticultural knowledge to the weeding and care of sick members' gardens.

Signed: CHET HARKINS

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1953

1953 Receipts:

1953 dues	$ 171.00	
1954 dues	208.00	
Auction	444.35	
Interest on savings	22.98	
Miscellaneous	94.80	
Total receipts	941.13	$ 941.13

1953 Expenditures:

Men's Garden Clubs of America	104.00	
The Minnesota State Horticultural Society	101.00	
Programs	57.00	
Shows	208.26	
Cheer	24.00	
Printing, stationery and postage	298.55	
Miscellaneous	87.21	
Total expenditures	880.02	880.02
Current year surplus		61.11
Plus surplus at beginning of year		1,386.88
Plus 10th Anniversary Project fund		108.40
Surplus as of December 31, 1953		$1,556.39

Represented by:

Cash in Northwestern National Bank	$ 556.39
Cash in Twin City Federal Savings & Loan Assn.	1,000.00
	$1,556.39

Signed: TOM HUGHES

FUNCTIONS OF PLANT NUTRIENTS - COPPER

Copper is one of the mysterious minor elements in plant nutrition - mysterious because it keeps its function in plant growth secret. When copper is deficient, plants react with characteristic hunger signs, as is true of nitrogen, phosphorus or potassium. Its essentiality in plant growth was established in 1927. A pesticide dust including bordeaux mixture was applied to corn and cow peas growing in Florida peat. After two weeks the plants were growing well where the dust was applied, but those on untreated plots were dead. As a result, extensive experiments were conducted with 59 species of plants with various soil treatments including copper sulphate. Tremendous responses resulted from copper applications.

Copper deficiency symptoms vary with different plants but might be generally described by the word "dieback." Tips of the plants are affected most seriously. They become distorted, shrivel and die. Copper deficiency was once very prevalent on citrus trees, small grains, vegetable crops growing in muck or peat soils; yield increases following copper application in sweet corn have been reported in Wisconsin.

Within the plant, copper probably functions, at least in part, as a component of some of the complex growth-regulating substances called enzymes. It has been found that if copper is removed from these enzymes, they become inactive. Copper also seems to have a function in chlorophyll formation.

Very, very small amounts of copper are required by plants, and even where extreme deficiencies occur, the application of 10 to 20 pounds of copper sulphate per acre is all that is necessary. Copper deficiencies are unlikely to occur in home gardens in readily recognizable form. As long as the gardener uses a complete plant food supplying all of the elements the plants require each year, the copper in the mixture will prevent deficiencies from occurring.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

During the eleven years I have been a member of this club, it has been my privilege to become intimately acquainted with many of you, and the friendships that have resulted are cherished ones. During this time I have been impressed with the type of men who love their gardens; I have been amazed at their patience and perseverance in their garden activities. All have found relaxation in their association with fellow gardeners and have benefited by the opportunities afforded for the exchange of experiences.

I am firmly convinced that the home gardener makes a better neighbor and a better citizen; further, the examples we set in encouraging the interest of others in our hobby is a worthy one. I have always felt that it would be difficult to find a better bunch of fellows than "our gang." This club has gone a long way in its 12 years of activities, and its success has been due to the active participation of its members in its undertakings. To be elected your president I consider a signal honor. I will devote myself to the best of my ability to the continued progress of this group. The way you have so willingly accepted your assignments for the coming year assures me that our efforts will be successful.

"Archie" Flack

TUBEROUS BEGONIAS

Tony Koester's 1953 Experience

Results obtained this past year were much the same as for the previous year with probably one exception. This was the size, which I believe was a trifle smaller than the year before. I think this is due to the fact that more attention is being given to the beauty of the bloom rather than to the size. The camellia type produces as a rule the largest flower and the Fimbrati or Carnation type produces a flower somewhat smaller. In crossing these to obtain the present frilled and ruffled blooms, they have sacrificed to some extent the size. I do not think this important in that the present-day blooms are, in my opinion, much more beautiful than the old.

I have not changed my method of growing, nor the soil mixture or fertilizer. The proper amount of fertilizer is very important for maximum bloom. Too much, of course, is bad; to the same degree, or even worse than too little. I tried, as an experiment, a few with very little fertilizer, about one-third of what I usually use -- and while the first blooms were about the same by the middle of the summer, they were much smaller. I then tried to bring back the size by fertilizing with manure water and also Rapid Grow, but without success. I had a second reason for trying this: I have found that quite often the tubers which were lost over winter were those which bloomed the best the previous year and the question which arose in my mind was whether the heavy fertilizing took too much out of the tuber. I have all of my plants marked and I know that the results obtained from new tubers during the years 1952 and 1953 were better than from those held over. This, of course, may be due to improper storage where the tuber dries out too much or some other reason. They are much like dahlia tubers in storing in that you should not permit too much dehydrating and neither should they contain too much moisture which will cause rot.

Some of the members have had trouble the past year for various reasons. One of these is mildew, which was quite uncommon years ago but seems to be causing more trouble each year. The principle cause seems to be lack of air circulation. Quite a number of members who started growing begonias in 1953 or 1952 have had very fine results; in fact much better than some who have grown them for years. One very important thing to remember is that the soil be light, made up of manure, leaf mold and peat to the extent of at least 2/3 or 3/4, and the balance ordinary garden soil. This permits good drainage and prevents a lot of rotting of tubers.

To Battle, You Organic Theorists!

Dr. Milton Carleton reports that tests at the great Askov station in Denmark show that chemical fertilizers will increase crop yields substantially over yields of plots where barnyard manure is used as the fertilizer. The tests, according to the latest report from Prof. K. A. Bondorff, have been conducted over a period of 50 years, yet no superiority could be shown for the manure-treated soils during the latter years of the trials. It had been expected that the gradual increase in humus would produce better yields in later years. Apparently roots left in the soil at harvest time were enough to maintain the humus content of the chemically fed soils.