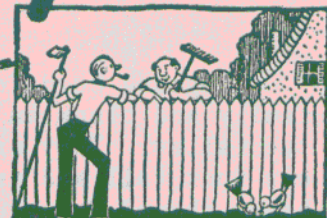




The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

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



April 1961
Volume 19, No. 4
G. "Vic" Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors
Wm. H. Hull, Otto Nelson,
Neil Barry

April Meeting

Date: Tuesday, April 11, 1961
Place: Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church
Knox Ave., So. & W. 50th St.
Time: 5:45 P.M. Sharp
Price: \$1.75

Officers

Les Johnson President
N. W. Christopherson Vice Pres.
Dwight Stone Secretary
Ev Haedecke Treasurer

Office of the Secretary
4620 Hampton Road

Office of the Exchange Editor
G. Victor Lowrie
401 Essex Building

P R O G R A M

1. Annual Shrub Sale selected specimens to aid in landscaping your yard. The complete list is a part of this issue of SPRAY. Member Dr. Leon Snyder will give a brief resume of each item before it is auctioned off. Bring guests!
2. Guest Speaker Former member and past president, Bill Swain, will speak on . . .

"Herbs, Their Culture and Use in Cookery."

Remember the Auction

The May meeting will again be our annual Plant Auction. Don't forget to bring your surplus seedlings - as well as those you may have raised just for this event. See the March SPRAY for additional details.

Please BRING GUESTS in April. The ample supply of shrub material makes it possible to bring any friends who might have space for shrubs and trees.

PLANTS OUT OF THE ORDINARY

by Maurice K. Lifson

Megosea Cordifolia, also known as Bergenia, belongs to the strawberry family and bloom in my garden the same time as early tulips and lilies of the valley. They are excellent in front of the border as they grow only one foot tall and are desirable even when out of bloom because of their broad heart shaped foliage, which stays clean and green until frost. The flowers come in pink clusters and I am glad to say that megasea cordifolia graced my garden for 15 years. In new plants divide to multiply.

I have several varieties of hosta in my garden also, but the one that is really outstanding is Hosta Honeybells, with fragrant white flowers on three foot stems. They are as fragrant as the flowers of hosta subcordata grandiflora and make a desirable accent subject. I secured a division of it from the Lehman gardens four years ago. It now has a spread of four feet and I shall divide it to make more graceful accent plants. All of my hostas start blooming in the middle of August.

Here is a real jewel that gardeners should grow as an edging plant in the border or in the rock garden. It is Silene Maritima (sea campion). Is a low growing plant producing an abundance of white flowers from mid June through September and will bloom sparsely until frost, providing you give the plants a haircut. In the early Spring I usually find a few volunteer seedlings which are very welcome. Interplant Silene with Browalii and Nemisia and a couple of Wianthus deltoides. These are all plants out of the ordinary. The first two are annuals and the latter a perennial. The Browalii are considered old fashioned because they graced "grandmother's garden", and I have seen them used as house plants. But now they are classed as out of the ordinary because one does not see them in many gardens, which is a mistake.

I am glad to see Nemisia carried by some of our local nurseries during the past year or two. Saw a potted plant of this 12 years ago. In fact I bought it and liked it so well that I have grown it in my garden all these years.

A slide showing a planting of Nemisia was shown at our last Christmas party. Mr. P. W. Young, not remembering the name of this plant, called me and asked the name of the plant that looked like orchids. The flowers come in various colors - mostly yellow, orange and white. I shall never be without the above mentioned plants. Some gardeners don't know what they are missing.

I have many more so called out of the ordinary plants that grace my garden, but "enough said for now" as they say in French, "a la prochaine", meaning "next time."

DR. FRED PROPOSES GARDEN OPEN HOUSE VISITATION PLAN

Dr. Fred Rodda emphasized the values to be gained from touring gardens. "A study of gardens is worth more to me than reams of literature." Emphasized the variables - soil, humidity, etc. - of different gardens. Then proposed we as individuals select the best date(s) for visiting our gardens and issue invitations for specific dates and hours, such to be carried in the SPRAY. Very commendable idea. It should work!

Since we can't tour every garden this summer, Program Chairman Brooks asked some of the newer members to discuss some phase of their gardening activities. We can't carry all remarks but here are some of the highlights:

Bill Swanson likes informality in gardening; his wife likes the formal. So - front yard informal without actual balance. Rear yard balanced by similar plantings but not duplicated items. Two similar mockoranges, for example, rather than two plants of same variety. Gives a sense of freedom but still balanced. Compromise always good, Bill. My wife likes to sleep with windows closed; I like them open. We compromise by closing them.

Dolph Bezoier says he is at the stage of doing things the second time. Gardening for only three years, Dolph plans to have a park out of his acre of yard. Now has many berries and fruit and a new greenhouse.

Bud Christenson says that he too is moving things around to correct original mistakes. His original garden now covered with a garden. Composting. Enthusiastic about roses. Hopes to specialize in chrysanthemums, which is said to please Dick Lehman.

Bob Smith brought some of his superb carrots. Grows several varieties, storing them in pits until December when he moves them to lard cans in 35 degree temperature. He stores about six bushels, using some for juice in a blender. Bob is one of our real vegetable experts.

Jim Nolan says he is a three year gardener too. Switching over to roses almost entirely now. Finds them very satisfactory. Al Nelson's been of real assistance - as Al always is. Jim put in 200 tulips last season.

Nate Siegel charts his garden each year to get the most from his 40 foot lot. Retains the charts for reference. Has a rock garden, a small pool surrounded by continuous color. Added some water lilies this last year.

Otto Nelson became inspired with gardening when he attended a flower show and then joined our club. Five years ago, says Otto, "I hardly knew a petunia from a geranium." Always too modest, Otto is a good gardener.

Mr. Bruce Johnstone of Northrup King spoke about annuals in the border. An excellent talk, a few gleanings therefrom: Although perennials are important, don't fail to have annuals too. Plant annuals in clumps, carefully selecting varieties to obtain any height or color you need. Don't overlook white in the garden - it is vital. For middle height use the newer hybrid petunias. The NK trial grounds are always open to us for visitation - they are one of the official All America testing grounds. Winners this year include Coral Satin petunia, free

DR. FRED PROPOSES GARDEN OPEN HOUSE VISITATION PLAN (Cont'd)

flowering, weather resistant and Rosie O'Day, a fine new pink alyssum which looks good even in hot weather. A good pink dwarf.

Bruce Johnstone recommends the following flowers for shady areas: Impatiens, Browallia, Torenia, Begonia, Coleus, Balsam, Viola, Alyssum and Vinca. Good annual varieties recommended for their fragrance include: Alyssum, Petunia, Stocks, Verbena, Nicotiana, Heliotrope, Mignanette, Evening Scented Stocks (Mathiola Bicornis) and Carnation.

Congratulations, Bill Brooks, for another good program.

THREE EARLY BIRDS

by Otto S. Nelson

There is no greater thrill in the Spring than to see the first leaves and blossoms make their appearance. Of course, the Crocus, Daffodils, Scillas, Tulips, Flowering Trees and others lead the field, but there are some early birds that may not be as well known. Here are some that I am growing and enjoy.

First, Sedum. There are many species in this family. I grow seven of them and like them all. They are considered an evergreen plant. However, some freeze back somewhat in the winter, others turn a reddish color, and one remains completely green. In March they either start new growth or show their Spring color. By mid April they all offer a beautiful sight. Starting in early June the blooms add much to the color of the garden. Some Sedum like shade, others part shade or full sun but all like rocks. Sedum can be used in many places and in many ways. Very easy to grow.

If I were to be allowed but one hedge shrub it would be the Ash Leaf, sometimes called False Spiraea. It is one of the earliest shrubs to unfold its leaves in the Spring with the most refreshing green found anywhere. Then in June it has beautiful creamy white plume-like flowers. It remains green in the Fall long after other shrubs have lost their leaves. Propagated easily by either sucker, root or stem cutting.

And last but not least, my third early bird is the Baptisia (False Indigo). It shows its new growth in early May and in three weeks it has grown a foot and is full of buds and indigo blue flowers. At its blooming peak its top is completely covered with these blue flowers. It continues blooming through June. The flowers are good for cutting. The blossoms are followed by clusters of plump seed pods. For the balance of the summer you have a beautiful bush growing two to three feet high and almost that wide. It freezes back in the winter but is root hardy with light mulch. Can be grown from seed. Grows in ordinary soil and in sun or part shade.

Some up (to the top of the hill) and see me sometime.

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

by Bill Hull

Dr. Joe Cohen, an associate member whom you new fellows may not know but whom the rest of us know well, has found gardening under lights a good and interesting hobby. We're glad to hear of this, Joe, and hope this continues bringing you enjoyment. Dr. Joe has been unable to attend club meetings because of a back ailment - but he could write a good article on indoor gardening. How about it?

For years Otto Erickson has used temporary cold frames which can be knocked down and stored after their brief use. Sounds like a good idea. Would it be possible to display one at a meeting, Otto, or are they too bulky?

A good discussion with Al Nelson and Carl Holst regarding so-called damage to flowers by children. We all agreed that children respect flowers and gardens in direct proportion to the people caring for them. They're much more inclined to avoid damage than many adults, particularly in public gardens.

Bob Adams sends a clipping - "Mixing sugar into the soil will kill nematodes, the Department of Agriculture said. This is a sensational discovery, since sugar is cheap and harmless to animals. For details write USDA, Washington 25, D.C."

A St. Paul firm is marketing a new fencing for use around trees, shrubs, gardens and walks. It is made of fiber glass, easy to bend, doesn't rot, Northern Fiberglass, Inc., 102 W. Fairfield Avenue.

We mourn the loss of two good gardening friends, long-time member Sam Abrams who passed away recently after several months of illness. Also Ben Dunn, a member of the Rochester MGC, Treasurer of the North Star Region, and a past president of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society. Both will be missed.

Very encouraging to see the North Star Region under P. W. Young's able leadership, planning some activities for 1961: A Twin City Garden Tour featuring men's gardens; a Fruit Farm and Arboretum Tour on May 20 to catch the flowering crab-apples and the late flowering azaleas; a Flower Show Workshop for fun on about June 16 and 17. No known expenses to our club or individuals in any of these events. I can practically assure you the cost of ribbons, etc., for the flower show is now covered by a friend.

Please make the following corrections on your new roster: 1) Add Royalston Jennings, 4636 Ewing Avenue, So., Mpls. 10 - WA 2-1451. 2) Change Archie Flack's telephone number to: WA 6-5582. Looks like we're overpaying the secretary.

Vic Lowrie, Walter Menzel, Curtis Rice and Dick Lehman and the four Better Halves all had breakfast recently in, of all places, Hawaii. Everybody there on vacations. Sounds like a wonderful trip and what a program these four could present when they return.

Ed Culbert is interested in Junior Men's Garden Clubs for youths. Anybody want to work with him along this line. We could serve capably.

Bill Brooks heads the new clubs committee of the North Star. Can some of you help him get a few leads and start a few new clubs?

Al Blackburn's La Jolla home and rose garden has been selected as one of the gardens to be toured during the American Rose Association's annual convention in San Diego in April. We feel this is quite a testimonial to Al's ability, particularly considering he's been in the new home only 15 months. He has 175 bushes, planted last year. Congratulations to you, Al, and thanks, Sherm Pinkham, for relaying this information to us.

Everybody seems to think the Mystery Man idea is a good one, but in March everybody waited for the next fellow to volunteer. C'mon, fellows, lots of you have a potted plant, a small group of seedlings, an extra garden tool, a rooted begonia, that you'd enjoy giving to a friend. All you do is telephone Les Johnson and tell him you'll be the Mystery Man for this month. Then bring your gift to the meeting, remember the identity of the seventh man who comes up to you and greets you with a hand shake, then award him the plant during the meeting when Les calls for the Mystery Man to proclaim himself.

Some gardeners are like their plants: they both get potted occasionally.

Congratulations, Dick, for the article in Flower & Garden, March 1961, which included twenty of your introductions among the best in the country. This article, according to Neil Barry, was constructed from reports made by members of the National Chrysanthemum Society, and discussed mums for each section of the country. Those listed for the "North" section were: Daisymum, Candleglow, Paper White, Gold Daisy, Delight, Early Gold, Crowning Glory and Ruby Mound.

Jewels of Opar were discussed in the March issue of THE GARDENER. Glen Cerney has grown this annual for at least ten years from seed. He will have plants for any members who desire them, but not until after the auction, probably in June. Let him know if you are interested.

PEONIES IN MAY FOR SURE

by Glen Cerney

Once in several years we have the old favorite peony Festiva Maxima in bloom for Decoration Day. Now it is easy to have peonies in bloom by the middle of May and into July by making use of the so-called "Hybrid Peony".

The commonly cultivated peonies are mostly the issue of the species 'albiflora' and 'suffruticosa', and the issue of albiflora and officinalis. Occasionally P. tenuifolia is seen in this area; this is the early red "fern-leaf" peony. Also we see more and more of the Tree Peony which is mostly a cross of two Chinese shrub peonies (shrub because the main stem does not die down during the winter), P. lutea and P. suffruticosa.

There are about 20 species of wild peonies, nearly all from Europe and Asia. Several have been crossed and re-crossed to produce the "Hybrid Peony" with its startling range of color and blossom structure. Colors include yellow, cherry, mahogany, purple, white and shades of pink and red. Blossoms vary from a giant butter-cup to full double, some with big center eyes. I have been pleased with those I have grown because of the good and unusual garden display and their superior adaptability in arrangements with Spring flowers. However, I would not dispense with my conventional peonies because they are indispensable, but if I were to start anew I would have a preponderance of the "Hybrid."