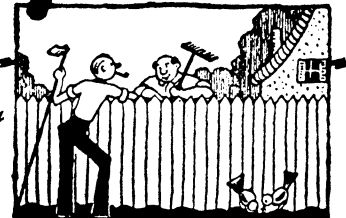




The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

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



October 1964
Volume 23 No. 10
G. Victor Lowrie, Editor

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

October Meeting

Date: October 13, 1964
Place: Mount Olivet Lutheran Church
Time: 5:45 P.M.
Price: \$1.75

Officers

Dwight Stone	President
Paul M. Kroeger	Vice-President
G. R. Christenson (Bud)	Secretary
R. E. Smith (Bob)	Treasurer

PROGRAM

Two extremely interesting illustrated talks, both of which you will not want to miss.

Larry Bachman will give film presentation of trees that are best suited for small and large gardens as well as for homes of different types of architecture, both small and large.

Fritz Holzman
Al Nelson
Jerry Olson

These three experimental gardeners have been making studies of various kinds of mulches most satisfactory for winter covering.

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

by Bill Hull

Thank you, gentlemen, for your many comments concerning my talk on "Gardening Across the USA." Glad you enjoyed it. Wish I could have included photos of the gardens of such friends as Rene Dufourd, Norm Christopherson, George Titus and Bill Kelley. Al Blackbourn's was included, as you know. Some of these slides were several years old, but this collection will never be completed.

Fall is upon us. Winter seems near. It seems so early. Our thirty-nine degree night of September 27 doesn't seem early when I was in New York state the week before that, and saw the rolling hills splendid with red and yellow trees. The area from Binghamton to Syracuse is much like our Minneapolis in weather and the trees were glorious.

"Have a smoke?"

"How come?"

"Smoked my first cigarette and kissed my first girl on the same day. Never had time for tobacco since."

I never had more fun than I'm having with Johnny Bohlander, my neighbor lad, over our neighborhood pumpkin contest. Johnny is growing for the MGCA National Pumpkin Contest, while I'm so old I have to grow just for the fun of it. Each morning Johnny starts for school, going by his big pumpkin. He looks it over, pats it gently and I always think he's about to give it a swift kick and urge it to get going faster. Then he comes over to our place and goes behind the garage to peer at my pumpkin. So far, he hasn't used calipers to compare. I haven't either, but I just happen to know mine is fifty-six inches in circumference. (Doesn't everyone carry a tape in the pocket?) Fellows, if you haven't had this type of fun with a lad, you've missed a lot. If so, you know how sincerely I'm pulling for his pumpkin to be the larger, and perhaps to be big enough to be a winner in our MGCA contest. A realization of how much this can mean to youth is exactly the reason Les Johnson and his group are working with local grade school children.

Have you seen the beautiful Park Board gardens near the Guthrie Theatre? Never have they been better, and to me, they seem best of all this year. I doubt if we fully appreciate what a fine job this group does for us. Let's have a Park Board Appreciation Night sometime and throw bouquets to all our friends therein.

"The minister dropped in for a sudden visit and was served milk punch because that's what others were drinking. Too late the hostess realized it had an alcoholic content. Unknowingly, the minister drained his glass with relish and remarked, "Thank God for a cow like that."

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

Continued

Northrup King's test gardens have been very praiseworthy again this year. I suppose they would be a deadly hazard if located on a very fast freeway. As it is, one notices cars slamming on brakes and drivers peering at the parties.

"Everyone should drive so his driver license expires before he does."

Bruce Johnstone should be congratulated for his work on a major spot on the Wholesale Packet Seed Division of the American Seed Trade Association. Good work, Bruce.

Larry and Helen Corbett are somewhere in the Orient. They left quite recently for a wonderful trip to Hawaii, Japan, Hong Kong and Indonesia. We wish them a fine journey and safe return. Just where I'd personally like to go.

"Even though the tongue weighs practically nothing, surprisingly few people are able to hold it."

Our neighborhood features a fairly tame albino squirrel. Pure white with pink eyes. To me he still looks like the first cousin to a rat.

Places I'd like to have been and can't make. Fort Wayne, Indiana September 26: Annual Meeting Johnny Appleseed National Foundation; World's Fair, September 26: Johnny Appleseed Day, speech by Grand Hampikian, national director, MGCA, over Mutual nationwide; Hotel Commodore, New York City September 29 - October 3: 19th American Horticultural Congress of American Horticultural Society; same date, place: Annual Meeting Garden Writers Association of America; Philadelphia, September 29, special invitation day to inspect new buildings of Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

Indented humor courtesy very fine club bulletin of MGC of Cortland, New York called, "The Cortland Sod-Busters."

* * * * *

Liberty Hyde Bailey says,

"I'M ONLY A MAN WITH A HOE"

"The hoe belonged to my father. He, too, loved the soil. I keep the hoe in my office as a reminder to work with the soil," he added.

During the past fifteen years, Dr. Liberty Hyde Bailey, the world's best known botanist, horticulturist, teacher, and student of rural life, has concentrated his time on studying the palm trees of the world. He has made plant-hunting expeditions to those parts of the world where palms grow. But at heart he remains a gardener. Each year until his accident, the 20 by 40 feet garden patch behind the rambling, red brick home in Ithaca, New York, became a connoisseur's delight. One year, it contained 307 different kinds of plants.

"The way to know a plant is to grow it," says this master gardener. He has no patience with those who "garden" mainly by joining clubs or going to flower shows. Likewise, he wants no one to apologize for being a gardener.

"I'M ONLY A MAN WITH A HOE"

Continued

Dr. Bailey writes, "The garden is an appreciation. It is an appreciation of activity, of color, of form, of ground smells, of wind and rain and sun, of the day and the night, of the things that grow."

Bailey likes to grow a plant in all its forms and varieties. He recommends the idea to all. One year he grew a hundred kinds of candytuft. Another time his garden overflowed with squash and pumpkin vines. Once I saw hundreds of ankle-high Thrifts (Armeria) in one corner of the Bailey garden. Once studied thoroughly, though, the Thrifts went the way of the candytuft, squashes, and pumpkins - out to make room for a new group.

Dr. Bailey likes garden work. He thinks that getting down on his knees to sow seeds or set tiny plants gets him in the right mental attitude. He prizes the ability to work with his hands, and pities anyone unable to turn his hands to a variety of tasks. He thinks that gaining manual dexterity increases mental agility.

Dr. Bailey is not one to dwell on the past. When he thinks he knows a plant, it must make way for a stranger. Too many people hesitate to sweep out yesterday's interests in life he says. To him, man should live each day adventurously, usefully and joyfully. To him, man should continue to be full of adventure, use and joy.

Fruits, flowers, and vegetables - he likes them all. Earlier I mentioned that a squash and pumpkin collection had occupied the garden space one year. Pumpkins have always fascinated him. In "The Holy Earth," the slim volume first published in 1955 to give his philosophy of living and since reprinted here and abroad many times, he wrote, "In all the range of vegetable products, I doubt whether there is a more perfect example of pleasing form, fine modeling attractive texture and color, and more bracing than in a well-grown and ripe field pumpkin. Place a pumpkin on your table; run your fingers down its smooth grooves; trace the furrows to the poles; take note of its form; absorb its rich color; get the tang of its fragrance. The roughness and ruggedness of its leaves, the sharp-angled stem strongly set, make a field that a sculptor cannot improve. Then wonder how this marvelous thing was born out of your garden soil through the medium of one small strand of a succulent stem."

LEGENDS

"Be an expeditioner rather than merely a traveler through life. Have a purpose and a plan."

"Be adventuresome - develop with your changing interests."

"Specialization is needed in the modern world, but wideness of view is all-important. Friendship with men outside your own field will mean a great deal."

"Enjoy life. Life is good, and it is worthwhile just to live and think and to enjoy life."

"Honor the teachers as the most important people in your town."

Author Unknown

SPROUTS FROM THE COMPOST HEAP

by Bob Smith

Dwight has been enjoying an extensive vacation in Canada visiting Montreal, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. In his absence, he has asked me to do his sprouting for him. Welcome back, Dwight.

Bill Hull's slide presentation and talk on "Gardening All Around America" at the September meeting was most enjoyable. It included everything from cactus to pines, from plains to mountains, and from rivers to the sea. Bill has been giving his illustrated talk to clubs throughout the United States and does a very good job of selling his own state in the presentation. Thanks for a very interesting program, Bill.

Thanks also to Neil Barry for donating the tulip bulbs that were auctioned at the meeting. Our Convention Fund is now \$10.00 richer. By the way, don't forget to plant your bulbs.

A note of sorrow. We regret the passing of Lee Straub. I think Harold Kaufmann's request to honor our members who had passed on with a moment of silence at our last meeting was most fitting. Whenever a member or wife of a member passes on, our club sends a memorial to the Arboretum. Memorials to Mrs. P. W. Young and Mrs. Bob Adams have been sent so far this year, and memorials to Fred Paul and Lee Straub will be sent to the Arboretum.

Dedication of the Lyndale Garden Center was held September 18 at 2:00 p.m. Howard Moore presided at the ceremony. Special mention was made of the efforts of Cortis Rice who conceived the idea originally. The Men's Garden Club was instrumental in initiating and promoting this project. More recent support and encouragement was given to this project by Les Johnson while president of MMGC.

Autumn is fast approaching. There is no better way to enjoy the autumn beauty than to drive down along the Mississippi River Valley, and while you're down that way, why not stop in and visit Louie Fischer. This is Louie's busy season harvesting and marketing his apple crop, but I am sure he would welcome a visit from any of the members. Louis will be speaking about apples at our November meeting.

This is the time to "corner" your leaves for winter covering and composting. The neighbors will be glad to get rid of them and the wind will be busy moving them if you don't.

It's also time to size up your rose plantings and decide what method of winter protection you are going to use. I know some are going to try Al Nelson's method this year. They didn't know it was so easy until Al gave us a demonstration on the August garden tour.

A quote to remember -

"Every man is enthusiastic at times. One man has enthusiasm for thirty minutes - another has it for thirty days. But it is the man who has it for thirty years who makes a success in life."

FLOWERING BULBS FOR WINTER

Few will deny that a few pots of flowering bulbs around the house during the winter have a wondrous power to lift the spirit and cheer the soul.

Growing bulbs for indoor flowering is easy enough, provided you remember two vital points. First, you must produce, in five to six weeks and in a small pot, the same kind and amount of root development that nature induces during five or six months in the open garden. Second, after the underground roots have formed in the pot and the top growth is well above ground, ample warmth, water and sunlight are essential to fine flowering.

The best potting soil for most hardy bulbs is a mixture of about equal parts of garden earth, peat moss or better still, well-rotted compost and sand. The basic ingredients for a winter garden in your windows are fertile loam, bulb pans, labels and the bulbs of tulip, hyacinth and narcissus.

Use 5 - 7 inch bulb pans, which are shallower than normal pots. Group 3 - 7 bulbs, depending on size, in each pan so that their sides barely touch, in enough soil to bring the tips of the bulbs at or just above the surface of the soil.

Press base of bulbs firmly into soil with finger tips. Do not apply pressure on top or sides of bulbs lest they crack. Initial watering is done by setting filled pans in a tray of water, leaving them there until the top of the soil shows wet.

Use a deep cold frame or an open space under a porch or in an unheated garage. Set the pans on a sand bed sprinkled with moth flakes, to repel field mice or other rodents. Cover with a mulch of marsh hay as an extra protection, and leave for from four to eight weeks. Be sure labels protrude for ready identification.

Pans of desired varieties may be separately lifted from time to time and inverted to check for root readiness for final growth. When bulbs are well rooted, take them out of the dark, cool forcing area and place in a bright window with not too much sunshine, preferably on the north side of the house. Cool temperatures will produce the best flowers. The pots should be watered regularly to keep the soil moist but not flooded.

THE VITALITY OF BURIED SEEDS

Mother Nature is a wise "old Dame" who has made many interesting provisions in her plant kingdom for protecting seeds and perpetuating the species. Just how long seeds will retain their vitality has always been an interesting question, and extravagant statements have frequently been made and published regarding the germination of very old seeds.

The general impression has prevailed that seeds of certain plants, mostly weeds, are able to retain their vitality for a long time, although buried in the ground. Germination tests of many herbarium samples of seeds of known age have been made, and in some instances seeds more than a hundred years old have germinated and produced plants.

Perhaps the first attempt to secure specific information on the length of time seeds are able to retain their vitality while buried in the soil was made by the late Dr. W. J. Beal of Michigan Agricultural College, now known as Michigan State University. In 1879 he buried on the campus at East Lansing, Michigan, twenty uncorked bottles of seed, each bottle containing fifty seeds of each of twenty different species of plant. One of these bottles had been taken up every five years. The writer was present in the Agronomy Class of 1919 which checked the seed after forty years of storage underground. At that time, ten of the twenty species germinated.

In 1902, the Seed Laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture started a buried seed experiment in which 112 samples of seed representing 107 species were used. A certain number of each kind of seed were mixed with sterilized soil and placed in common flower pots. These pots, each covered with a porous saucer, were arranged in sets and buried in the soil at the Arlington Experimental Station, Washington, D. C. As a result of this method, the soil within the pots when taken up, has resembled the soil outside in moisture and compactness.

The trench in which the pots were buried was about 9 feet wide at the top and fifty feet long. At one side the trench was made 8 inches deep; in the middle, 22 inches deep; and at the other side, 42 inches deep. The trench thus had three distinct levels, or shelves, each about three feet wide, of undisturbed soil. The sets of pots, 32 in all, were buried on each of these shelves, 8 sets on the shallow or A level, 12 sets on the middle or B, level, and 12 sets on the deep or C level. This arrangement made it possible to take up a pot from each of the different depths, by digging across the trench without any unnecessary disturbance of the remaining sets.

The seeds upon being dug were tested at once for germination in the greenhouse. In 1941, it was necessary to make a removal of all the experiment as the War Department required the area for military purposes. This completed 39 years of an experiment with eight diggings.

THE VITALITY OF BURIED SEEDS

Continued

The following list shows the species which produced sprouts in 1932. Ten of these marked with an *, have produced sprouts from each depth each year tested. Tobacco is the only cultivated crop included in the ten.

Foxtail*	Willow-leaved Dock	White Vervain
Kentucky Bluegrass	Curled Dock	Jimson Weed*
Sand Dropseed	Broad-leaved Dock	Tobacco*
Ramie	Lambs Quarters	Black Nightshade
Smartweed	Goosefoot	Great Mullin*
Poke Berry	Wild Senna	Common Plantain*
Bush Clover	Hedge Bindweed*	Ragweed*
White Clover	White Morning Glory*	Oxeye Daisy*
Black Locust	Rough Cinquefoil	Black-eyed Susan
Rose Mallow	Dodd	Alsike Clover
Evening Primrose	Blue Vervain	Canadian Thistle*
Celery	Broad Plantain	

Of the 107 species buried in 1902, 71 grew in 1903 after one year; 61 grew in 1905 after 3 years; 68 grew in 1908 after 6 years; 69 grew in 1912 after 10 years; 50 grew in 1918 after 16 years; 5 grew in 1923 after 21 years; 44 grew after 30 years; 36 grew after 39 years.

It will be noticed that some seeds did not germinate at consecutive periods of testing. The following findings of these experiments are of interest:

1. The depth which seed are buried has little effect upon the preservation of their vitality.
2. None of the cereals or legumes whose seeds are used as food germinated on being dug up.
3. The seeds of weeds and wild plants survived better than those of cultivated plants.
4. The seed of weeds showing the highest germination and the fewest failures in both locations of experiment are those common and persistent weeds in the locality where the tests were made.

From these findings, it is quite evident that plowing under weeds which have gone to seed will not exterminate them. Each plowing or spading of an area infested with weed seeds brings some of them near enough to the surface to germinate and at the same time buries others deeply enough to preserve their vitality. No normal crop rotation system is long enough to effect the eradication of persistent weeds. This conclusion, however, does not lessen the importance of plowing or hoeing weeds under before they go to seed.

When preparing a lawn for seeding after the spreading of dark soil, etc., do not blame the weed infestation on the seed which was supposed to be of the highest rating.

T. G. Lindquist, Member, MGC of Rockford, Ill.
From "The Corn Belt Farmer" Vol. 1, No. 1, 1902