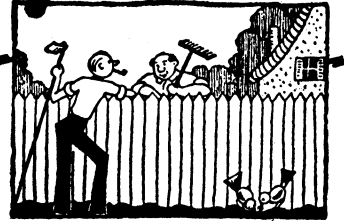




The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

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



March 1956
Volume 14, Number 3
G. "Vic" Lowrie, Editor

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

MARCH MEETING

Date: Tuesday, March 13, 1956

Place: Mount Olivet Lutheran Church
Knox Ave. S. & West 50th St.

Time: 5:45 P.M. Sharp

Dinner: \$1.50

Officers

George Titus	President
A. R. Blackburn	Vice-president
N. W. Christopherson	Secretary
Wm. H. Hull	Treasurer

PROGRAM

1. The Raising and Care of Tuberous Begonias by John Weid.
2. Continuous Bloom from Spring to Fall by Archie Flack.
3. Discussion Period.

Office of the Secretary
N. W. Christopherson
6145 Clinton Ave. So

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

Your Program Committee has another tempting evening for you with Mr. Weid, of the Hiawatha Valley Gardens at Red Wing, and our own Archie Flack.

Both Speakers will supplement their talks with slides.

* * * * *

As you sow your seed flats this spring, remember to add an extra flat, box, can, etc. for the Club Auction. Label it "Hold for Club Auction" and identify the plant, its variety, color and if it is a new variety or unusual, tag it as such. Our Club depends on the earnings from the May Auction to pay for a large share of our current operating expenses, so let's all set aside something of good quality and in sufficient quantity to make a worthwhile contribution to the Auction.

February 23, 1956

Mr. George Titus, President
Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Titus:

I have your letter of February 17th extending to the Minnesota State Horticultural Society, an invitation to hold its 1956 annual meeting in Minneapolis, with the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis acting as host.

It is with great pleasure that I now advise you that the executive committee, acting on behalf of the Society, is very pleased to accept your kind invitation.

We are well aware of the fine facilities available in Minneapolis, and also of the fine record of performances of the Organization. We will look forward to working with your capable members of the committee with the assurance that the 1956 convention in Minneapolis will be outstandingly successful and enthusiastically attended.

May I add that this office will be pleased to cooperate in any way possible in developing plans and assisting in the organization of the various preparations and details.

Very truly yours,

E. M. Hunt, Secretary
Minnesota State Horticultural
Society

WORLDS LARGEST ROSE, Is It a Bush or a Tree?

No one has challenged the claim that Tombstone, Arizona has the worlds largest Rose. This venerable Lady Banksia, planted about 1856 and owned and cared for by Mrs. J. H. Macia for more than half its long lifetime, is 58 inches thick at its base, with two main branches 38 1/2 inches thick and 28 inches thick. It covers an area of 4600 square feet and when in full bloom in the spring with over 100,000 white blossoms, her beauty is fabulous. 200 people can dine in the patio in its shade at one time. Every year thousands of people view the famous Lady Banksia and opinions are equally divided whether it is a Rose Tree or a Rose Bush, so take your choice. Many articles have been written about Tombstone's celebrated Rose. January 1956, issue "Arizona Highways" has a good article of some length and also pictures.

By Jack Forrest

But who can paint
Like Nature? Can Imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers?
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows?

James Thomson (1728)

PREPARE FOR THE FLOWER SHOWS

By The Hardshell Crab

Now is the time to plan for the spring and fall flower shows. The seed and nursery catalogues are in. We have time now, before spring work begins, to make our selections, to plan the changes and improvements we are going to make in our flower and vegetable gardens.

The first step in any garden program is to prepare the soil. As we are planning to raise prize-winning flowers, we must now, if we didn't do it last fall, give attention to our garden soil. Let's put plenty of humus in it. Let's get manure, either from local nurserymen or from South St. Paul. Or let's use peat moss, old straw, corn even vermiculite; anything that will hold moisture and improve the ground. Our sandy soils need it now.

The second step will be to select good varieties of the flowers and vegetables we want to show. Some varieties are consistent prize winners. Let's find out what they are from those who know and plant them.

To make a good showing at the shows, you will want a good many kinds of annuals and perennials. Now is the time to get rid of some of the old clumps that have been in your border many years. Replace them with newer and better varieties. You will be glad you did.

Buy only from reputable dealers. The professional members of our Club are reputable dealers. They will appreciate your business, will rectify any errors quickly and will help you with some of your problems.

Study up on arrangements, practice one or two to start with and enter those in the show. We want more arrangements. One from each member will make a tremendous difference in the show.

There is only one man in the Club who hates entering a flower show more than I do. I begrudge the time and effort put into it. Yet, when the thing is over, I always feel happy. Happy because I was able to overcome my attack of "lazinessitis" happy because I helped to make the show a success; and happy that I had done my part; proud, too, to be a member of a club that can do things.

Now, let's get started for the 1956 Flower Shows. Let's do our planning today.

WANTED

A good recipe for sulfur and molasses. Maybe George Luxton's Grandma could supply one. Spring is just around the corner and you know we are having a joint show with the Richfield Men's Garden Club. We can't let spring fever slow us down; let's be out in the garden with vigor as soon as the snow leaves the ground. I've already talked with the men from the Richfield Club and they are workers. The only way we stand a chance is to start early. We have three aims in this Spring Show:

1. To get acquainted with the fine group of men in the Richfield Club and to further the spirit of friendliness between the two groups.
2. To put on a flower show in a doubtful time of the year, that will be a credit to both clubs.
3. To come out tops in points. WE MUST

The date of the joint show is June 23-24.

Eng. Hoyme

OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

By Bill Hull

This is the time of the year the average gardener wonders how he can reduce his income tax expenditures to enable the purchase of all those plants he first listed on the order sheets from the spring catalogues.

Glad to hear from Al Nelson that he sends a news letter to member Tom Foley in Florida. We all miss Tom and these other fellows who can get away to the warmer climes. Tony Koester is on his way homeward. Rene Dufourd follows soon. Vic Lowrie is in California and Herb Kahlert is in the deep south. Perhaps many others we haven't heard about are soaking up the sunshine.

Rene Dufourd starts instructing a six weeks Adult Education Class at the YWCA on April 11.

President George Titus welcomed back these members who have been ill. Bob Adams, Benny Benson, Scotty Carmean, Bill Hull and Walter Menzel. Joe Cohen just recently entered the hospital and we hope he'll fast be back in the fold.

If you missed last month's program of home-grown talent, suffice it to say, brother, that you missed a dandy. Orrin Turnquist, Dick Lehman and P. W. Young proved they deserve to be called experts. Congratulations to "Pink" and his program committee.

Speakers, attention: P. W. Young asks that you keep him posted on your garden speaking dates so he can keep a record of our Club's contributions to the community in this form. He also suggests that you might refer speaker requests to him if you want to lighten your speaking load. If you're not now listed with the Speaker's Bureau, let P. W. know what

subjects you prefer.

Don't forget Archie Flack's auction in April, at which meeting we'll have a chance for some new shrubs and trees, the proceeds going toward our \$250 pledge to the Arboretum Fund. Wonderful idea.

Why don't we establish a permanent Club Property Caretaker with whom we could leave club equipment and records which are now strung around in various members homes? There must be many members who have old Club records, auction material, show supplies, books, etc. that would like to know what to do with them. If they were all stored in one place, they'd be easier to find when wanted. Who has the space and would volunteer.

We're sorry to see Chuck Lampright leave the fold due to increasing family, new location, more responsibilities. When the situation changes, Chuck, let us know. And Visit us.

I was surprised to hear that earthworms or night crawlers can create such a problem in a lawn that they make the lawn slick to walk on at night. Who will be the first fatality. "He broke his leg when he slipped on a night crawler."

A suburban ladies federation of garden clubs is seriously considering permitting their women to purchase flowers for entry in their big show. The only good I can see that might come from this (ignoring the florists' gain) is that the men might find a few more blooms available for their own show a week later.

REMEMBER TO SOW THOSE EXTRA FLATS FOR THE AUCTION

THE SEED BUSINESS

Seed growers these days are fighting hard to maintain the recent brisk business they've enjoyed. New varieties are constantly being introduced, such as pink celery purple cauliflower, refrigerator sized watermelons and bigger and brighter flowers.

Most new varieties are hybrids, a process which was first successful in the thirties with sweet corn. Hybrids generally grow faster, are more disease resistant and produce greater yields. A hybrid also gives a seed company a brief competitive advantage since it is practically impossible to reproduce another's fast selling hybrid.

Once a new seed is perfected, growers must work continually to avoid cross-pollination or regression. Bees are confined to one patch by spreading nets over the plants, as Ferry-Morse does in an onion research field. To remove regressed inferior plants, our own Larry Corbett says Northrup King employs "roguers" to patrol rows of plants, removing any not up to standard.

But after all the work is done, gardeners are conservative about accepting new varieties. Burpee devoted considerable space in last year's catalog to Tampala, a spinach-like vegetable from China which withstands hot weather and grows too high to collect sand. But gardeners weren't interested. Today Tampala is relegated to a short paragraph in the new catalog and spinach has been reinstated.

Most expensive of all the relatively common seeds is the hybrid petunia which wholesales at \$350 an ounce, ten times the price of gold. In small lots it retails at the equivalent to \$1,000 an ounce, an ounce containing 300,000 seeds. Tinier, but not so expensive, is the lobelia seed, of which there are 700,000 seeds in an ounce. Only a few pounds of this seed are produced annually.

This year the sales emphasis will be even greater on flowers over vegetables, with 30 million Americans planting flowers as against 15 million raising vegetables.

(Condensed from The Wall Street Journal)

THE SELECTION OF ROSE VARIETIES

By Al Nelson

If twenty-five experienced rose growers were given a list of a hundred of the best rose varieties in commerce, and asked to pick a dozen of the best of these for an amateur, it is probable that no two lists would be identical. Choice of variety is mainly a matter of personal taste. However, a half dozen or so of the varieties would probably be the same on each list, with the rest of the choices scattered over a considerable number of varieties. Of the 75 varieties of hybrid teas and 20 varieties of floribundas that I grow, I will list 12 hybrid teas and 6 floribundas as being a good choice for a beginner. I also give the 1956 ARS rating, since the rating is national, it does not always indicate how that rose performs in this section. Here is the list:

Hybrid teas: Peace 9.6, Crimson Glory 9.1, Charlotte Armstrong 9, Chrysler Imperial 8.8, Traubel 8.7, Tiffany 8.7, Show Girl 7.6, Golden Masterpiece 7.4, Confidence 8.3, First Love 8.0, Sutters Gold 8.1, and K. A. Victoria 6.7.

Floribundas: Fashion 8.9, Frensham 8.6, Betty Prior 9.0, Red Pinocchio 8.8, Ma Perkins 8.0 and The Fairy 8.6.

GROWING SEEDLINGS UNDER LIGHT

By P. W. Young

Growing seedlings under light is simply adapting good gardening practices to indoor conditions, substituting fluorescent light for outdoor light. Adapting these practices is more important than the kind of lamps or benches you have or the kind of seedlings you grow.

Second hand fixtures will be fully as satisfactory as new ones providing they are in good working condition. If they have reflectors that confine the light more than is required they can be changed to the required spread by any sheet metal worker.

A housing containing two 48" lamps makes a good fixture. Hanging it with small loop type chains makes it adjustable for height. The lamps should be 40 watt daylight type. This type of fixture will light an area approximately eight square feet satisfactorily.

Like the Ford car that could be any color you wanted so long as it was black, you benches can be made anyway so long as they are slatted to permit air circulation. That is most important in growing seedlings under lights.

I have three types of benches. Number one is used for starting seeds and handling seedlings immediately after transplanting. This bench is approximately 30" wide by 54" long. It is lighted by a standard two lamp fixture and accomodates four 12" by 24" flats. Completely enclosed with wall board sides, top and back, with plywood doors and painted white inside, it will give the greatest possible concentration of light for starting seedling growth. The closed bottom has one removable board, providing an adjustable air inlet. At each end and near the top are two vents, which insure good air circulation. On this removable board are installed four light receptacles. One lamp will further help circulation through the heat it supplies. Additional lamps provide bottom heat as required. A hanging metal hood eliminated lamp breakage caused by dripping water.

My number two bench has an open top with the same bottom arrangement of board and lights. It goes into action when the enclosed bench will not hold all the seeded plantings and transplants. The lighting is the same as number one but is not as intense, lacking the reflective side walls. It is used through the winter months for house plants and cuttings, being approximately 30" by 60" in size.

My number three bench holds the overflow, being mainly used for potted tuberous begonias. It has the same double light fixture but is a bit too large for good light distribution, being 3' by 5'.

Every fall I hose my flats and apply a good fungicide such as Cuprinol when they have dried. This eliminates fungus trouble later on.

In preparing a flat for seeding, I line the bottom with a double thickness of newspaper to prevent soil leakage through the bottom cracks which are necessary for drainage. Atop the paper I place a 3/8" layer of Perlite or sand.

My potting mixture is two parts of good black soil, one part rotted manure or compost and one-half part of peat moss screened through a 1/8" screen. This dry mixture is placed in the flat to a depth of 1/2" below the top edge after being firmed down.

For small seeds (pansies and petunias) the soil is very lightly ruled in rows 1 1/2" apart. Fifty seeds mixed with a very small amount of finely screened sand are seeded to a 12" row. They are pressed down firmly and covered with finely screened sphagnum moss to a depth of not over 1/16" which is just enough to hold the top moisture.

GROWING SEEDLINGS (Continued)

The flat is now ready for soaking. I use a galvanized pan, four inches wider, four inches longer and one-half inch deeper than the flat. Flats are set in this pan on two pieces of lath and the pan filled with water and Wilson's Anti-Damp, which material I have found provides the best insurance against "damping-off". When the paper in the bottom of the flat is wet, one end of the flat is raised and holes are cut in the paper through the bottom slots. This is repeated on the other end of the flat and insures prompt entry of water into the soil. When the topsoil and moss are thoroughly soaked, the flat is lifted and allowed to drain back into the pan. When through dripping, it is placed on the number one bench. If another flat is not ready for soaking, the solution is siphoned into gallon jugs for reuse. Metal containers must not be used for Anti-Damp.

The seedling flat is covered with a sheet of glass with a small vent on one side of the flat. The glass is covered with a four sheet thickness of newspaper to eliminate any light on the seed bed. No overhead light is used. Bottom heat to 70-75 degrees is provided in the daytime and whatever heat the basement affords at night. The glass is removed twice daily and turned over to remove the collected moisture.

When the seedlings have not quite reached up to the glass, remove the glass and newspaper. Disconnect one lamp and hang the fixture high to reduce the light. If the top sphagnum moss is dry, spray with a very fine mist. A heavier spray will knock the seedlings down. Temperatures can be gradually reduced to 65-70 degrees.

When germination is practically over, replace the second light and lower the fixture to 8-10 inches above the seedlings. Soak again when the top one-half inch of soil is dry. Use water only.

When the seedlings have developed good root growth (1 1/2 to 2") with plenty of fine side rootlets, they are ready for transplanting. I get a better root growth by using 2 1/2" plant bands, but I leave them there without a second transplanting.

In transplanting I prepare the flat exactly as for seeding excepting I screen soil mixture through a one-fourth inch screen. With a piece of 2 x 2 I press the soil firmly into each band.

The next step is to spray lightly the top of the soil to dampen only the top one-half inch, providing a top that will not break down when holes are made for the seedlings. The lower soil is dry so that it will fall around the roots.

In transplanting, take out a half dozen plants at a time. Discard any seedling not having a good root growth with plenty of side roots. When the soil is dry you can separate the plants without damaging the roots. Don't be afraid to plant a good share of the stem below the ground, leaving one-half to one-fourth of the plant above the surface. With holes punched, lift the plant by the leaves and with an old steel kitchen knife press the dry dirt in the bottom against the roots. Firm the top soil around the plant. Put your variety markers in place, and the flat is ready for soaking as when seeded. Then the flat is ready to go back under the lights.

For the first few days, lights and temperature should be about the same as before transplanting; then the temperature should be reduced to room temperature or 60-65 degrees in the daytime.

Moisture should be carefully watched. Usually it is advisable to water thoroughly about once a week. I prefer soaking in water only. A light feeding of Rapid Grow every two or three weeks as the top soil is dry, is advisable.

The seedlings are kept under lights until about the first week in May when they should be hardened off. This can be done in a cold frame or a cool room or porch with an electric heater for emergency heat. After frost danger is past, they may be planted

NOTICE

Corrections and additions in 1956 Committee Appointments

Civic Interest (A general over-all committee, with several sub-committees

Cortis N. Rice, Jr. Chairman

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Industrial Beautification | J. M. Witmer, Chariman |
| 2. Arboretum Fund Project | A. W. Koester, Chairman |

Arrangements and Decorations

Bill Hull, Chairman

We just received word that Tony Koester is in the St. Mary's Hospital for surgery. We do not have a report on his condition at this time but we were informed that he will have to undergo a series of operations. Tony, we sincerely wish you a speedy recovery and will be looking forward to your return to our meetings.

DWARF AND SEMI-DWARF TREES

Dwarf and semi-dwarf trees are of two origins: Malling and Clark. Malling stocks come from the East Malling experiment station in England and are identified by Roman numerals, such as EM II and EM XI. Malling stocks do best in cool soils. The desired variety is grafted to a Malling rootstock which controls the size of the mature tree. 210 American varieties and Malling stocks have been successfully combined.

The Clark dwarf, discovered at the Iowa experiment station 20 years ago, is made up of parts of four trees. Onto a hardy rootstock such as Hibernial or Virginia Crab is grafted a select trunk. A foot above the ground is inserted a dwarfing section or interstem, on top of which is grafted the desired variety.

The little EM IX and the Clark dwarf — no taller than a man — make ground picking and spraying simple, although the shallow root system of EM IX sometimes necessitates supporting with a post. Commerical apple growers are being recommended EMVII and EMII.

(Condensed by special permission from Cappers Farmer)

WINTER MORNING IN THE GARDEN

By Elaine V. Emans

Had I not seen it, I could not
Believe that from this very spot
A hollyhock of flaming hue
Will spring to sear the heaven's
blue
While butterflies will sway and
dart

And Mrs. Buss will zoom ahead
To make her honey and bee-bread
Did I not know a green and gold
Time of enchantment must unfold,
I'd swear no earth so cold as this
Could burst its icy chrysalis.