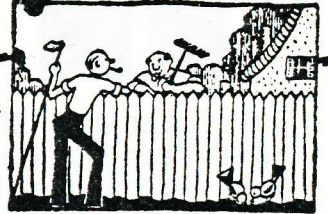




# The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

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



AUGUST 1986, Volume 44, Number 8

## THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB SUNDAY AFTERNOON TOUR

AUGUST 10th, 1986

- ° Wives, sweethearts, and guests are welcome.
- ° Buses will leave from the Lake Harriet United Methodist Church, 49th Street and Chowen Avenue South, at 1:30 P.M. on Sunday, August 10th.
- ° The tour will be to gardens in Shakopee, Edina and other locations in the south metropolitan area.
- ° Following the tour, a supper will be served at Walt and Melba Gustafson's, 3812 West 57th Street, Edina.
- ° Cost: \$5.00 per person for tour and dinner.

Send reservations and checks to Russ Smith on the tear-off sheet below.

RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, AUGUST 7TH.

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places on the tour bus for me and my guests.

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$5.00 per person).

-- Make checks payable to MGCM --

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

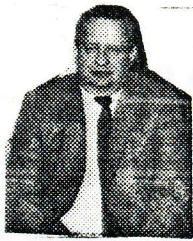
Send To:

Russ Smith  
1610 Holdridge Terrace  
Wayzata, MN 55391

Phone: 475-1878

Names of Guests:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_



BIG BOB'S CORNER

August, the month of harvesting many of our crops from our garden; the time of year when most of the flowers we planted are in full bloom. It is the time of the year when we should all get out into our gardens and take a good look at what flowers we can cut and what vegetables we can harvest to bring to the annual Flower and Vegetable Show. Andy Marlow, our show chairperson, and his committee have been working hard to make this a show of shows. Remember: If you need help in selecting flowers for the show -- Call Me -- or anyone in the Club who exhibits. I am sure that they will give you a helping hand. The date of the show is August 16th and 17th. The place is the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Let's try for 100% participation in this year's Flower and Vegetable Show. One bloom from each member would really make this a big show.

During the past six months there has been a lot of activity going on in the Club. This activity was to help support the 1988 Convention. We have gathered approximately \$1500.00 for the convention fund, which amounts to about \$12.00 per person. Our goal was to make as much money as possible to help reduce our club member registration expenses. But, in order for us to reduce this cost we need your help. Yes, we are in need of ideas and gentlemen to help put them over. During the next meetings we will be hearing more about the 1988 National Convention. We will be looking forward for those ideas you have to reduce our cost and we will be looking for gentlemen to work to help put them over.

It's sign up time for all of us to join a committee for the 1988 National Convention. We are in need of workers and chairpersons to head up the committees. Think about it. What better way is there to support your organization?

What will the Tour committee do for an encore, for the August tour with the ladies. The July tour was an excellent one. The gardens were great and we had a lot of fun. The chicken dinner was very good. Thank you.

Make sure that you get your reservation in early for the August tour. Knowing the Tour committee, they will make this August tour the tour of tours.

TIP OF THE MONTH:

Support the Flower and Vegetable show. Bring a flower or two to the show.

Need help in selecting a flower -- call one of the old exhibitors for help.

Too far to travel? Bring your flowers and vegetables to a drop off station.

Mark your calendar for both the bus tour and the Flower and Vegetable Show. LET'S MAKE BOTH EVENTS A BIG HIT. SEE YA THERE

WE WELCOME AS NEW MEMBERS

Tom Beach	222-8972	James Saustgen	545-3433
1133 St. Clair Ave.		9200 - 40½ Ave. N.	
St. Paul, MN 55105		New Hope, MN 55427	
	Robert Stepan	537-3321	
	7811 - 44 Ave. N.		
	New Hope, MN 55428		

# July MGCM Tour Visits 5 Member Gardens

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—reviewed by Andy Marlow

About forty MGCM members and their guests spent Tuesday evening, July 8, visiting members gardens in the north and northwest suburbs. They gathered at Webber Park in the Camden area of Minneapolis and, fortified by fried chicken and all the fixings, set out in an air conditioned Robinson Coach for the tour. Tour committee chairmen Bob Olson and Russ Smith had done their homework -- arranging a tour of very representative gardens. They also passed out a printed description of each garden, telling a bit about each gardener, too. Your reporter is borrowing freely from the handout for this story.

Gene Ackland is a relatively new member, but obviously not a new gardener. His home in Plymouth is four years old, as are his gardens. Since his homesite is largely clay, Gene had some of it hauled away and replaced with a peat/sand mixture. This year alone he brought in 60 yards of new soil, peat and sand. Good soil preparation has paid off. Perennials planted the first year are now large enough to be divided to populate a new garden on the southeast corner of the property.

The original garden is in the northeast corner. The center of the multi-level plot is used primarily for vegetables and plantings of raspberries and some of the new Minnesota varieties of blueberries. These are surrounded by perennials. There's also an asparagus patch near the back of the garden. And hollyhocks, a biennial that seeds itself easily, stood high above the rest of the plantings. On a lower level at the back of the plot is Gene's work area and compost pile.

The northeast bed flows smoothly into the backyard's center bed, also heavily planted with perennials -- various daisies, mums, and others. Finally we came to the new garden in the southeast corner, planted with some new materials (including dahlias) and with divisions from the existing beds.

Flowers and shrubs literally surround the house, too. A couple of note were: a tall, spikey white flowered plant called "obedient plant" because its flowers will stay whichever way they are bent; and a spectacular tower geranium with bright red blossoms and variegated leaves perched on the front porch. The shrub plantings are neatly mulched with red lava rock. Even the fire hydrant, on the property line, is mulched half with the red rock and half with the neighbor's brown limestone.

Duane Reynolds is MGCM Secretary. Duane saved a lot of time he would have spent answering questions by having labels for nearly every plant. It was especially helpful for lily fanciers to identify some of the 30 varieties he has planted in the front yard of his New Hope home. Also in the front, succulents cascade down the slope from the front porch to the drive way. Across the drive is a large dahlia bed which was just about to begin blooming.

On the way to the backyard, visitors passed the bed of miniature roses on the south side of the garage -- also neatly labeled for easy identification. In the back are a series of six hexagonal raised beds, about 20' feet in diameter. In one are Duane's prize-winning gladiolus, which were not yet ready to bloom. Another was filled completely with strawberries. The remaining four are devoted largely to vegetables. Duane has twice replanted beans this year. The local rabbits, one of which we say in a neighbor's backyard, have been helping themselves generously to entire plants.

Along the fence on the north side of the backyard is the grape area. Many different varieties, including the popular Edelweiss and Candance, are growing here. Dwarf apple trees provide a little shade from the grapes on hot summer days. Rhododendrons and

(over)

azeleas are planted along the back wall of the house with a perky petunia border. They gradually blend into a miniature jungle of hostas, ferns, wildflowers and other shade-loving plants under the second story deck.

Herb Neby and his wife, Carol, are plant collectors. They have one of everything a person can grow. Some self-proclaimed experts say we should mass plant one color or variety to avoid a cluttered look, but if the Neby's place is cluttered, more should use their approach. Of particular beauty are the rock garden two beds that slope down toward the driveway into the tuck-under garage on the south side of the house. The rock garden plants are set off by the luxurious foliage and spectacular flowers of the many hibiscus plants.

The entire north side of the house is lined on two levels with potted plants. These and the hibiscus spend the winter indoors, of course, under a huge bank of lights Herb has installed in the basement. Not potted, but in the ground at this location, were two tuberous begonias with very dark red, deeply fringed blossoms. Unfortunately Herb could not recall the name for those who wanted a similar specimen.

Herb also collects trees. From a beautiful young pin oak in the front to an almost-bonzai ginko in the back corner of the back yard, trees are everywhere. The ginko, according to Herb, has been nearly everywhere, too. He's moved it about 15 times, trying to find just the right spot. Now it looks like one of those knarly, but picturesque specimens on a rocky outcropping overlooking Lake Superior.

Phil Smith has recently moved from a condominium to to an older home atop one of the hills in the north Tyrol Hills section of Golden Valley. The steep hillsides provide a fantastic view, but are not so suitable for gardening. The slope originally came with a few feet of the front door, but with lots of work, landscape timbers, split limestone, fill, a new bobcat and some design help from Roger Koopmans, that's changed.

As visitors ascend from the driveway on the brick and timber stairs, they come first to a patio, ideal for lounging and relaxing. The next terrace up is filled with a collection of hostas. A few more steps up is a bed of evergreens -- primarily yews and juniper that came take the shade from the large, mature trees that surround the property. Finally, the upper level has a large semi-circular patio bordered with beds of alyssum, fibrous begonias and arborvitae. It's a formal, but inviting entrance area to the house. Another step or so up is a grassy area with flower beds on either side, just beyond one of which is a 20' drop straight down the hill.

Work is still in progress at Phil's. Timbering is started up the hillside in the back, and Phil promises he'll find a spot sunny enough to begin growing his famous delphiniums again.

Hal McIntyre's major gardening interest is tulips. He grows about 700 of them at his south Tyrol Hills home in Golden Valley. He really got interested about three years ago and has added new bulbs each year. He has patterned his garden beds after the English Gradens he saw at Hampton Court in England -- that is, meticulously maintained with with between each of the beds.

Tulips, though, last only a short time each growing season, so Hal has taken to growing annuals from seed to fill the four tulip beds when the blooms are gone. Much of his knowledge has come from reading and from exchanging information with other members of the club. This year he even grew an entire bed of geraniums from seed, a job that many a more experienced gardener would be reluctant to take on. In addition to the geraniums, he also is growing marigolds, zinas, white petunias, dusty miller, ageratum, coleus, vinca and dianthus.

It was growing dark as a few of us nibbled the raspberries in Hal's backyard. They are the purple colored "Heritage" Variety that bear now and in the fall, too. A delicious bite or two brought to an end a delightful and well timed MGCM tour.

## Starting Over

### Renovating The Landscape

Phil Smith

For the third time in my gardening life, I have "started over" in renovating and reconstructing the landscape following a move to a new home.

A year and one-half ago, my lovely wife Wanda and I bought a 50 year old home in Tyrol Hills in Golden Valley. We had enjoyed gardening at our previous townhouse, but yearned to have the space and flexibility of a larger garden and landscape.

The home we found and purchased in Tyrol Hills was built in 1939 and we bought it from the widow of the original builder. It has required extension updating of the interior, as well as the exterior.

We have about 1 3/4 acres just 3 1/2 miles from downtown Minneapolis, a large portion of which is semi-wild with large oak and evergreen trees.

As can happen in 50 years, the landscape was much over grown and near jungle in some areas. Many weed type trees (box elder, sumac, cottonwood) had volunteered, growing in such places as near the foundation, sidewalk and driveway.

We have embarked on a complete renovation and are now more than half way finished with our new landscape plan. In another year, we should have a virtually complete remake of the landscape, with several new garden areas.

The editor asked me to record my thoughts on "starting over", with the idea that the comments might be useful to others contemplating such a project. I do believe there are some basic guidelines.

First of all, get a good plan, preferably designed by a professional. Few of us are good landscape designers, although we may be good gardeners. We have several professionals in our club, and one of the best must be Roy Koopmans of Faribault. Most designers will do a detailed plan for a reasonable fee, whether or not their company is hired to do the work.

One will find that a good design can be useful for years to come and executed over a few years, if necessary. It is quite helpful to have the overall view and broad perspective provided in a plan.

Secondly, be courageous. Do not hesitate to remove overgrown shrubs and trees or even those in the wrong place. A nice blue spruce of 6 to 10 feet is beautiful for several years, but in 50 years may be 60 feet tall and cover a 30 foot diameter.

(over)

Fifty (50) years is hard on buildings and people, and it also changes plant materials.

Many people seem to feel that removal of an otherwise nice tree is unthinkable, even though it may be very poorly located. Take it out! We removed a large oak which was a beautiful tree, but was located within the driveway and was hard to avoid when backing out of the garage. The previous owners had tolerated it for nearly 50 years, and our neighbors were "surprised" to see it cut.

Be creative. When renovating, it is easy to incorporate new garden structures, such as walkways, terraces, decks, retaining walls, trellises, gazebos, etc.

At our home, there were extensive stone retaining walls which also were badly deteriorated. We had a plan for replacing such stone walls with treated timbers and salvaging the useable old stone for a new large retaining wall to greatly extend and enlarge our front garden area.

However, it involved the movement of many tons of stone and some 200 cubic yards of earth or fill. A couple of contractor estimates indicated a big cost (\$20,000 plus, without planting), so I decided to buy a used skid steer frontend loader and do the job myself. I found the "Bobcat" type machine to be very useful and fairly easy to learn to operate. Also, we could do the job at our own convenience. The machine bucket holds about 5 wheelbarrow loads of material and is extremely maneuverable. However, they are quite dangerous to use and one should do so only with great caution.

When renovating, one also has the advantage of adapting a landscape to one's special plant interests. It is much easier, when renovating, to create required conditions, such as sun or shade areas, good drainage, space for a greenhouse, small nursery, rock garden, compost area, storage shed, etc.

Don't be in a hurry. Renovation can be costly and involve major changes. But, it doesn't all have to be done this year. Doing the project over a 2 or 3 year period makes a lot of sense.

Also, consider changes in elevation. Even a one timber or 6 inch elevation of a planting area has a nice effect. Twelve inches completely changes the picture, and 18 inches does wonders for the back when working the area. Changes in grade or elevation can make nice landscape features.

Finally, it is good to be cognizant of the longer term aspect of the landscape. When renovating, one can have some areas developed for immediate planting and use, but still fit them in the overall scheme of the finished plan. Think of the useful life of the reconstruction and measure the effort and costs, again the longer term.

But, most important, be courageous.

GRASS SELECTION FOR THE HOME LAWN

(Ohio State U bulletin adapted in consultation with Jack Kolb)

It is important to select a grass adapted to the area and to the intended management level. The cheapest seed is likely to be the most expensive and least satisfactory over the years, but buying expensive seed does not guarantee good results.

A seeding of elite Kentucky bluegrasses gives the highest quality lawn in full sun in Minnesota. Red fescue is more shade tolerant and may be mixed with bluegrass in shaded turf areas.

Several new turf type perennial ryegrass varieties are available. Pennfine and Delray are two varieties which may be used where ryegrass is needed. They will not provide the quality lawn that Kentucky bluegrass will, however. Perennial ryegrass may be seeded with Kentucky bluegrass to provide more rapid establishment. The ryegrass should not be more than 10-15% of the mixture for best results.

Bentgrass maintenance is so expensive and time consuming that bentgrass is not recommended for home lawns. Bentgrass is considered a weed in a bluegrass lawn. It should never be included as part of a seed mixture.

It is extremely important, no matter which grass is seeded, to use clean, weed-free seed with a high percent germination. By law, all seed sold in Minnesota must be correctly labeled. The label provides specific information concerning the seed contained in the package and should be studied because there are variations in quality seed. It is possible to obtain seed free of unwanted grasses if the buyer is persistent and willing to pay a premium price.

Table 1 gives information concerning grasses and mixtures, their potential quality, and their management requirements. Grasses which make the best lawns, need the most care and should not be planted unless proper management is intended.

Table 1. SELECTED LAWN GRASSES

Grass or Mixture	% by Weight	Quality of Lawn	Sun or Shade	Care and Cost of Upkeep	Seed per 1000 sq. ft.
Varieties or Blends of Kentucky Bluegrass	100	Excellent	Sun	Average to Above Average	1-2.5 lb.
Kentucky Bluegrass	40-50	Good	Shade	Average	2-4 lb.
Red Fescue	50-60				
Red Fescue	100	Fair	Shade	Below Average	3-5 lb.

NOTE: Red fescue alone or in mixture with Kentucky bluegrass may also be used for low maintenance lawns in sunny areas.

KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS

Many varieties of Kentucky bluegrass are available for use on home lawns. Some of the commonly recommended varieties and their characteristics are listed in Table 2. A Kentucky bluegrass blend consists of two or more

(over)

varieties and has a number of advantages for the home lawn. Use Kentucky bluegrass blends rather than any single variety. At least one or two of the varieties in the blend should be resistant to the leafspot diseases.

Table 2. KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS VARIETIES STILL SOMEWHAT POPULAR IN MINNESOTA

	Resistance to			
	Leafspot (Melting Out)	Smut	Weed Invasion	Close Mowing
Adelphi	E	E	E	E
Baron	E	E	E	E
Bonnie Blue	E	E	E	E
Glade	E	E	E	G
Newport	P	G	F	P
Park	P	E	F	P

E = Excellent, G = Good, F = Fair, P = Poor

YES. The FLOWER and VEGETABLE SHOW is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday August 16th and 17th just as Bob Churilla states in his column on page 2.

RIGHT. You didn't find any more about it in this issue of the SPRAY.

WHY NOT? Because in a week to ten days you will be receiving a special announcement with suggestions and registration forms.

SO. START GETTING READY.



Return to  
**THE GARDEN SPRAY** of MGCM, INC.  
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