

VOLUME 47 · NUMBER 2 · SPRING 2018

# Lilacs

Quarterly Journal of the International Lilac Society

Legacy  
of Victor  
Lemoine

*The Lilac*  
with Golden Leaves

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**- ON THE COVER -**  
**PHOTO BY**  
**Tatiana Poliakova**

Early spring lilac bud.

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*Photo by Tatiana Poliakova*

- ON THE BACK -  
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TATIANA POLIAKOVA

- EDITOR'S DEADLINE -  
FOR SUMMER ISSUE:  
JUNE 20, 2018

*please send photos + articles*

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# President's Message

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Dear Lilacs Enthusiasts,

Spring has finally arrived and not too soon for all of us. Now the Daffodils, Crocus, eastern redbud trees, Bradford pears, and others trees and shrubs are in different stages of buds development. It has been a hard winter in the Northern Hemisphere. We are glad to say goodbye to the snow blizzards (which have blanketed the land), the bitter cold and the floods.

Nature is waking up. The days are getting longer. The birds are eagerly looking for mates and building nests. Lilacs showed signs of life in late February here in Virginia, USA. The lilac season has begun. We are getting ready to attend our International Convention April 19th-21th. California here we come! I hope many of you have registered for this convention. Our Hosts Dr. Giles Waines, Gary Parton and Karen McCauley, ILS Convention Chair, have been hard at work preparing for this annual gathering. Karen and her husband, Tim McCauley, made a special trip to Riverside, CA to check the facilities and the routes we will take on our way to visit the lilac collections. I'm hoping many new members, by that I mean, ILS members who have never attended a convention, have registered. It is a great opportunity for them to meet lilacs experts, collectors and lilac friends that they have made through the social media, and to have a chance to acquire new and rare lilacs at our auction. We are going to have our two board meetings to take care of the business of the ILS. You will read about all the news in the summer issue of Lilacs. The annual membership meeting will take place on the 19th.

The fall 2017 issue of the journal Vol. 46, No 4 had striking pictures of lilac foliage from dark violet to bright red with all shades in between. The article Falling in Love with Lilacs by Jane Kirkpatrick is wonderful. In her book she tells the fascinating story of Hulda Kluger a self-taught hybridizer of lilacs with an indomitable spirit





*Photo by Tatiana Poliakova*

who inoculates everyone in her corner of the world with the love of lilacs. In 2006, the ILS Convention was held in Woodland, Washington. We visited Hulda Klager's garden and visited her house. Her hoe hanging on one of the walls had the longest handle. The lilacs surrounding the house were in full bloom and the garden was full of visitors hauling away potted lilacs to plant in their gardens.

The Winter 2018 issue Vol. 47 No 1 has beautiful pictures provided by Tatiana Poliakova of lilac buds encased in ice. It contains excellent articles: Some Lilac Diseases of Note by Margery Daughtrey, News from the Lilac Museum by Claire Fouquet, Twilight of *Syringa vulgaris* 'Dappled Dawn' by Mark DeBard, and Lilac Promenade by Elena Belyh and Tatiana Poliakovia added 'richness' to our journal.

Thank you again to our Editor Tom Gober for this issue. In spite of printing errors (we using a new printing company) it is another excellent journal. No matter what happened during the printing



*Photo of 'Martha Stewart' by Zelimir Borzan*

process it is the content that counts!

Talking about books, Martha Stewart, a well-known American author, who writes about decorating, gardening, and baking out of this world wedding cakes, etc, has a new book out which is her 90th. Martha's Flower's by Martha Stewart with Kevin Sharkey - A Partial Guide to Growing, Gathering and Enjoying has just been released in the US. It is a lovely book, the best thing is that there is an entire chapter on lilacs, mostly pictures of magnificent lilac bouquets.

I heard from Beryl Lee our only ILS member in New Zealand. While we are savoring springtime she is putting her garden to bed. It is fall in her country. Seems strange that March, April and May are fall months and that in June, July and August it is winter. We will see her at the Russian Symposium. Hongxia Cui from Beijing, China will also be attending. We are looking forward to seeing them both.

The ILS Coloring books are close to being produced and distributed. Thank you again to Kelly Applegate, AHS Youth Chairman, for getting that project finished. It will be wonderful to hand out to the children and to adults also when giving talks on lilacs. Who can resist lilacs event when they are in pictures.

After the convention in California, as you know, a group of us will leave for Moscow to attend the Russia Symposium May 21-28 at the Moscow State University and in St. Petersburg. After four days in beautiful Moscow we will travel by train to St. Petersburg for the second phase of the Symposium. Tatiana Poliakova, ILS RVP for Russia/Asia and others ILS members are excited to welcome us in their country to show us their beautiful lilacs We will see these lilac friends and will for certain make new ones. The program is impressive. Wow! Eight days of activities centered on lilacs to celebrate the 125th Birthday Anniversary of Leonid Kolesnikov - Russian breeder par excellence.

Early this year, we had the sad task to say goodbye to Edward F.

“Ted” Collins who was known by many as Doc Lilac. He left the world of lilacs after a life time of promoting and selling them out of his amazing nursery, Lilac Hill, in Perinton, NY. He was a businessman, a horticulturist, a Lilac Ambassador and he loved the color purple. He was the ILS Regional Vice President of the Atlantic Region. Thank you Mr. Collins for your many years of service to the ILS and for sharing your love of lilacs with so many.

Mes amis it is time to prepare for our big lilacs adventures. It soon be time to board these planes for California and Russia. I think we are going to have a roller coaster of a time. Exciting yes! For those of you who are unable to participate, do not worry, our next journal will be full of pictures and articles. We are going to tell you all about our lilac experiences.

Mes amities,

Nicole Jordan  
ILS President



*Photo of 'Tat'yanin Den' by Tatiana Poliakova*



*Photo of Musee de l'Ecole de Nancy Jardin*

# The Legacy of Victor Lemoine: Hybridising on a Heroic Scale

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*By Judith Taylor*

## **Introduction**

It is difficult for us to imagine how new the world of horticulture was in the early nineteenth century. Garden centre counters currently groan under the weight of begonia, petunia, impatiens, alyssum and numerous other bedding plants. Mesh bags full of gladiolus bulbs greet us at every point. Stripped down rose saplings are available even at drug stores, and lilac bushes can be purchased with ease. Scarlet “geraniums” are a cliché and the cognoscenti turn their noses up at them. We take it all for granted and even find it a bit ho-hum. We seldom stop to think how all this came about. It was not always so. This glowing abundance was achieved by the extraordinary efforts of many devoted gardeners and hybridists, both professional and amateur, but there is one whose legacy stands out even in a crowded field: Victor Lemoine.



*Photo of 'Monique Lemoine' by Tatiana Poliakova*

## Historical Background

By the mid-nineteenth century exciting new ornamental plants were steadily coming to Europe from the Americas, the western parts of Asia and even from Africa. This process had started in the seventeenth century. Once the Far East opened to Western trade, the trickle of exotic plants rapidly became a torrent. Where did they go? They were distributed in several ways. Botanical gardens wanted them to round out their scientific collections, though a dried herbarium specimen was just as valuable as a living plant. Wealthy people grew the new arrivals on their estates. Some of the aristocracy were avid plant collectors and several had strong scientific interests. Important new organizations developed in the principal cities, such as the Horticultural Society in London, later to become the Royal Horticultural Society. These groups played a major role in supporting the explorers. They organized expeditions, issuing precise instructions as to what was needed, and bought land on which to grow the plants which came back. Kew Gardens started out as a private royal garden, as did the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, but both later became powerful national institutions. Large numbers of the new arrivals were shared with commercial nurseries which had skillful and knowledgeable operators. The middle class was small but ambitious, anxious to move into aristocratic circles. This was the time of the Second Empire in France. Building a large showy house with a large showy garden and a conservatory for good measure was a first step. Here were the customers for the nurseries' new and improved wares. Political and social change was coming. Something had to be done to stave off another round of revolutions. The 1848 uprisings in Berlin and Paris were a stark reminder of what simmered under the surface. The idea of free public parks emerged. The first one had opened in England, near Liverpool at Birkenhead, in 1841. Parks were a relatively inexpensive way to relieve some urban rage. With all these changes the market for new ornamental plants expanded very rapidly. Nurseries abounded. Gardening was a recognized trade or career, governed by apprenticeship. Very often sons followed their fathers into gardening on the large estates, or into the family nursery business.

## Victor Lemoine

Pierre Louis Victor Lemoine, 1823-1911, came from such a family. His father and grandfather had both been in charge of large estate gardens. They moved to Delme in Lorraine before he was born. The village was not far from a well-regarded school for boys. It says something about their level of prosperity that he could attend the school for the full duration of the terms. They did not have to take him out at an early age to do his share of the work. Victor also became a gardener, but with considerably

more education than his forebears. Instead of serving the standard apprenticeship close to home he attached himself to three important horticulturists of the time. France had a powerful tradition of horticulture. For example, Louis XIV's gardener, De La Quintinie, was a significant figure at court, in control of huge plantations where he grew food and ornamental plants. The king had to have fresh melon and peaches for breakfast every day of the year, winter or summer. Coping with such exacting requirements took a very special sort of skill. By spending time learning from the masters, Lemoine prepared himself very seriously. He worked in the nurseries and earned his keep that way. He first went to E.A. Baumann in Bolwiller, a village in Soultz-Haut-Rhin, probably in 1840 when he was seventeen. Very little is known about some of his activities in this stage, not even how long he stayed there. E.A. Baumann was not just a master gardener, but a botanist to whom Lemoine later dedicated many of his hybrids. It is possible that Lemoine learned the technique of hand fertilizing plants to obtain new varieties from Baumann. The latter was one of the earliest

*Photo of Pierre Louis Victor Lemoine*





nurserymen to do deliberate hybridizing or plant breeding, not just selection of attractive variations in existing plants Lemoine next went to Van Houtte in Gand, Belgium. Van Houtte was one of the specialists who received plants from explorers all over the world. When he was older, Lemoine thought that this had been the most formative of all his experiences. Van Houtte was a skilled horticulturist, an artist and a scholar. He published *Flore des Serres et de Jardins de l'Europe* (Greenhouse and Garden Flowers in Europe) at regular intervals in fascicles, describing and naming the new exotic material as it arrived. He had himself travelled in the East and South America on plant hunting expeditions. Finally Lemoine spent another unknown amount of time near Lille, with the firm of D'Auguste Miellez. Once again, he left almost no record of why he went or how long he stayed. Miellez had a fine reputation as a rosarian. After Lemoine finished the apprentice period, he immediately made it clear that he was going to do new and different things. In 1849 he bought a small piece of land in Nancy, forty miles away from the family business, and opened his own nursery



*Photo of 'Maréchal Foch' by Charles Hottelich*

in the Rue de l'Hospice. He obtained the money from his father. Nancy was a good choice. The textile industry was expanding rapidly. The merchant class supported thirteen horticulturists and four nurseries, as well as forty market gardens for produce. In spite of his impressive credentials, it took Lemoine a little longer than one would expect to become established. Lemoine was a taciturn man, not given to recording very much about himself. The reason for the slow start may have been because of his broad ambition. Possibly he did not want to grow the obvious things that the public buys. He began almost immediately to select and cross-breed certain flowers. Those readers who remember the story of Dr 'Franceschi' (Emanuele Fenzi) in Santa Barbara will recall that he too was so devoted to science and rare varieties that he never made very much money. (Pacific Horticulture, 2002, volume 63, numbers 3 and 4.) In Lemoine's case, this state of affairs did not last very long. By 1852, he was selling the first documented double flower he had produced, a double purslane, possibly *Portulaca grandiflora*, originally from Brazil. The purslane was the subject of his first brief mention in a horticultural publication. In 1854, there was a double potentilla, 'Gloire de Nancy'. The actual species with which he worked is not recorded. Within a few years, he began to prosper and by 1855 bought a much larger piece of land opposite the railroad station. There he was able to indulge his passion for selecting and hybridizing on a grand scale but also had room to provide the standard stock everyone wanted. He married a woman from his home village, Marie Louise Gomieu (1834-1905), and they had three children within four years. The youngest was his son Emile, 1862-1942, who inherited many of the same qualities and talents which made Lemoine so remarkable. Emile's two elder sisters were not married and had no children but he married one of his Gomieu cousins. Their son Henri was also an important plant breeder and horticulturist. One must not overlook the significant contribution made by Lemoine's wife, Marie Louise. She was a countrywoman, familiar with gardens and growing things, but her husband also taught her the precise techniques needed to cross breed flowers. She did it extremely effectively. The tools they used were very simple and easily available to anyone: a water



*Photo of 'Hyacinthiflora Plena' by Zelimir Borxan*



*Photo of 'Mme Lemoine' by Charles Holetich*

color paint brush, fine pincers, a needle and small scissors. The family owned the firm until Henri closed it in 1960. The Lemoines had weathered the great tragedies of the Franco-Prussian War 1870 1871, the First World War 1914 1918 and the Second World War 1939 1945, but were defeated by the post WWII peace. The extremes of austerity brought about by the war made ornamental horticulture almost impossible. The last few catalogues issued by the firm were very small, printed on poor quality paper and lacking the great profusion of plants which had characterized the family's work before. Times were very hard and it is unclear what happened but partially it may be because they did not adapt to the new circumstances. Victor Lemoine remained extremely active until the 1890s but then started to slow down. The work was continued by his son Emile. During the Franco-Prussian war, when food was almost non-existent and the news consistently bad, the Lemoines consoled themselves by going into the nursery and hybridizing. It was a release from distress. Later plant varieties were issued under his name but in fact the work was largely Emile's by then. Lemoine was a very civic-minded man, serving for more

than eighteen years as a municipal councilor. He supported the planting of trees in the streets and managed the affairs of the town's parks. Beside the stream of new varieties with which he enriched so many gardens, he left another legacy. It was Lemoine who started the Nancy Horticultural Society (Société Central d'Horticulture de Nancy), based on the model from Paris, Société National d'Horticulture de France. Founding an institution of this sort has immense importance on the development of a branch of science or industry. The European countries, including Great Britain, were small enough and homogenous enough to benefit from centralized societies. The United States was too large and sprawling to give rise to similar organizations in the earlier years. The closest equivalent was the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, founded by C.H. Hovey in 1834. There was no American Horticultural Society until 1911. The S.C.H.N. was a very serious organization, holding annual flower shows with prizes and awards, and keeping meticulous records of each event and meeting. The Secretary was another nurseryman, Ernest Gallé, a most forthright and earnest individual. He did not hesitate to express himself forcibly when he disagreed with Lemoine or anyone else for that matter.

As the stream of hybrids and modified flowers gushed out of Lemoine's premises, Gallé questioned the constant need to make all these changes. He thought that many of the predecessors had been glorious and worth while, and had barely been digested by the industry before being displaced again and again. This was actually a good point.

### **What Drives the Hybridist?**

What is he or she seeking? There must be something else beside the need for commercial success. Its importance is undeniable, but it is probably not the principal force. Some of the drive has to be pure artistry, creating beauty for its own sake. Passions are seldom satisfied, and an initial success only creates a greater appetite for more. The challenge of defying nature is a driver and to some extent the 'if only' syndrome is involved. 'If only' we had a (begonia)

(gladiolus) (lilac) (peony) (pelargonium) with greater (fragrance) (hardiness) (longer blooming season) (brighter colors) (double petals), then we would be happy. Victor Lemoine left almost no written records and no one really knows why he was so passionate about creating new varieties. Before we take a deep breath and look at Lemoine's horticultural achievements, or at least those of which there are records, it is necessary to examine how plant selection and cross breeding work very briefly.

### **Elements of Plant Breeding**

Baumann, Lemoine and the others were working before the Abbé Mendel's work on genetics was published (1865) and recognized to be fundamental. There were some early papers and treatises on plant crossing in France, notably by the Vilmorin father-son team, Louis and Henri, and Henri Lecoq whose work appeared in 1827. In the United States Luther Burbank also worked on a giant scale from an empirical base. The key to their results was selection, seeing a characteristic which had special promise in one specimen out of a whole field of similar plants and then propagating that plant intentionally. Size was an obvious variable, but so were color, fragrance, hardiness and so forth. For generations this was how all improvements in agriculture and horticulture were made. The idea of causing such changes artificially by cross breeding had to be freed from the restriction of religion, of being considered impious and against the will of God. All major innovations suffered from this at first. What Mendel showed was that heritable characteristics followed straightforward and reproducible laws. The great advances in molecular biology recently have allowed scientists to see the mechanism by which these steps occurred, the splitting and reknitting of the DNA spirals.

Early plant breeders had no idea of what they were doing when they tried to cross species within a genus. Many of their accomplishments were purely due to chance. Doubling of petals is now known to be due to an excess of sterile stamens. They might unwittingly breed for a recessive characteristic and be very

successful. Great moments of insight came when a breeder took the rather insipid results of the first cross and backbred them against the parent generation. If there were four offspring of a tall pea and a short pea, one (the dominant) would be tall, one (the recessive) would be short and two would be of intermediate size. Allowing the short pea to fertilize itself or crossing it with the parent ensured the continuity of short stature. Hybridizing brought the hidden world of the recessive genes to the surface, freed of the dominant sway. It is now known that dominance and recessiveness are not always fixed and may vary with the generations of hybrids, but is a useful shorthand for most purposes. Most of the plants we treasure in our gardens are the result of dozens of crosses between species and generations. Once a promising variety emerges and fulfills the desired criteria, commercial methods of propagation depend on cloning to disseminate it widely. Thirty four years ago, Richard Gorer unraveled many of the threads that lead to the modern hybrids. Even in 1969 he wondered whether some of the original species-parents still existed in the wild, to strengthen and re-invigorate forms which may have become corrupted by constant cloning. It must be much worse now with continuing and persistent loss of habitat.

### **The Lemoine Hybrids**

At this stage one enters the realm of superlatives. Almost every specialty plant society could claim him for their own. Lilac seems to hold pride of place, but gladiolus, begonia, peony and pelargoniums run close behind. Two hundred and fourteen cultivars of lilac are attributed to the Lemoines. Almost all of them were commercially viable. Lemoine started to breed lilac in 1870, during the war. He had had a small unassuming lilac bush in his garden for several years, with bluish double flowers, *Syringa vulgaris* 'Azurea plena'. Another Belgian nurseryman, Libert-Daminot of Liège, had introduced the plant back in 1843. Breeding from this plant had been in the back of his mind for while and that was why he bought it. Persian *S. vulgaris* and the Chinese *S. oblata* collected by Père D'Incarville were the sole lilacs available at the time. At the age of



*Photo of 'Katherine Havemeyer' by Tatiana Poliakova*



forty seven Lemoine was presbyopic (needing reading glasses) and had lost some of the dexterity in his hands, so his wife did most of the intricate and frustrating pollen transfer in the minute lilac flowers. The pistils in the double flowers were frequently bent and deformed. She made over a hundred crosses, using pollen from thirty different single lilac varieties. Out of all this work only seven useful seeds were formed. The next year they were able to gather thirty fertile seeds.

Five years later in 1876, three of their seedlings bloomed. One of them, *Syringa* 'hybrida hyacinthiflora plena', was a true hybrid between *S. vulgaris* and *S. oblata*. It was released in 1878. One or two plants could still be found at the Arnold Arboretum and maybe Kew in 1988. It was important because of its attractive lilac-blue color, great fragrance and early blooming habit. After further breeding, the whole race of "French Hybrids" was created and formed the foundation of modern lilac with giant double flowers. Soon afterwards Emile began producing most of the varieties with his mother, even though Victor's name continued to be used. From 1878 to 1900, sixty seven lilac cultivars were introduced by the house of Lemoine. From 1900, when Victor Lemoine was seventy eight, to 1911, the year he died, another sixty four were released. Between 1912 and 1933, Emile and later his son Henri released sixty two cultivars. It is hard to know who bred any particular plant. The transition was seamless. Unfortunately they seldom left detailed records of what they did. This is similar to the complaints about Luther Burbank. His secrets died with him and most of his work cannot be reproduced. Scholars who have studied the Lemoine catalogues note that there is little detail and no concession to the average person hoping to learn something about the plants.

# Kids' Activity Book of Lilacs



"A lilac in every garden...  
the world over!"

International  
Lilac  
Society

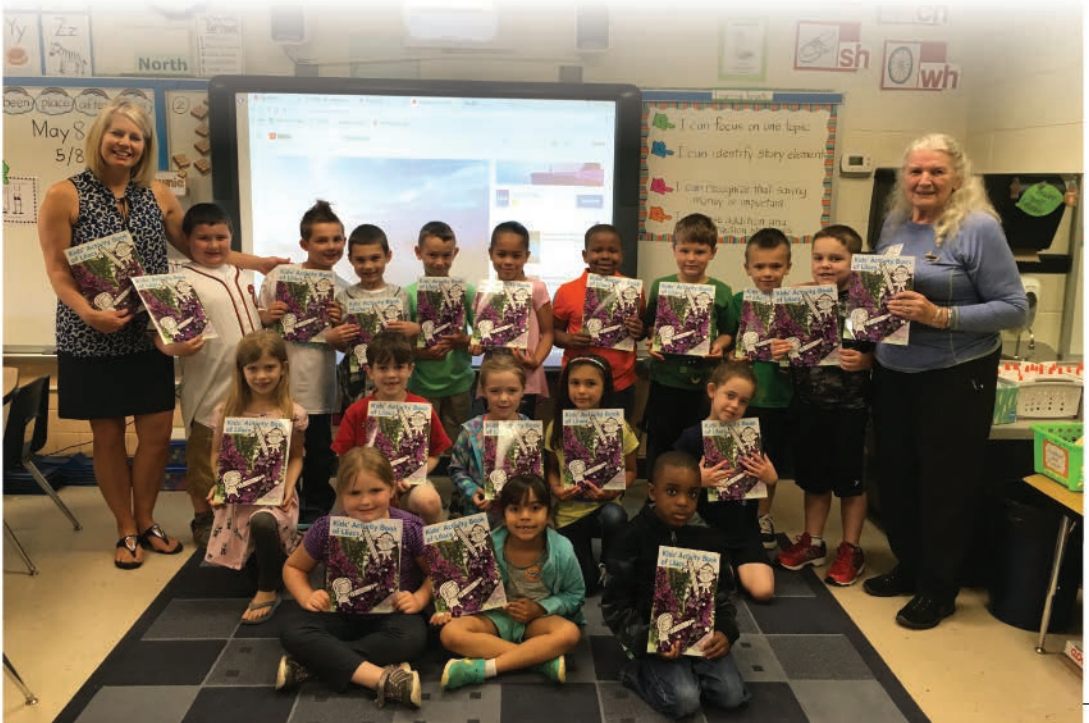
# New ILS Coloring Books: Hot off the Press!

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Kudos to the ILS Youth Committee which has developed a lilac inspired coloring book. The idea behind the book is to use it as an educational and promotional tool for the society, encouraging children to get involved, generate awareness of the society and ultimately increase our membership.

To help offset the price of producing and shipping the book, we are asking for a minimum donation of \$1.00 per copy. If you would like to order more than 10 copies the price will be \$.50 each. Members residing outside the US and Canada will need to contact Karen McCauley for pricing.

**To order please email or call:  
Karen McCauley, Treasurer  
mccauleytk@aol.com**



# In Memoriam

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DAVID HIGHTSHUE



JUNE 3, 1939 – DECEMBER 28, 2015

David Hightshue, a long-time member of the ILS died in the morning on Monday, Dec. 28, 2015. David wanted so much to live, but cancer and treatments he endured took his life. David and his wife, Barbara lived in Conover, NC. He was born June 3, 1939 in Indianapolis, Ind., the second child and first boy to Charles and Ruth Hightshue. His mother wanted him to become a medical doctor, and David made his parents proud. He was an athlete high school and attended Indiana University on a full football scholarship. He received his degree of Doctor of Medicine from IU Bloomington.

David served honorably in the Army's Medical Corps, leaving in 1976 as an LTC. He moved his family to Chattanooga, Tenn., to join a civilian medical practice. Ten years later, severe health problems forced him to close his solo practice. Touchingly, he always wanted to be "a good provider, he even worked through dialysis, which left him so weak. But then his first kidney transplant (21 years!) let him enjoy life and work again.

David joined the ILS with his wife Barbara because of her love for lilacs. It was not his first choice of plant societies to join but once there he enjoyed it. David loved people and thus he looked forward to the annual conventions to see old friends and make new. David was an active participant at the meetings and served on the board from 2009-2011. He and Barbara purchased many lilacs at the auctions for her garden.

David loved to travel. He was a much loved guest at relative's tables and in their homes in Germany. David had a great ability to truly taste foods and found nuances in wine. At concerts he was enjoyably able to pinpoint the different sounds of instruments. Oh, and football! David watched games with utmost concentration and knowledge. A charter member of the Carolina Panthers, he enjoyed all their recent wins, missing only their last. Golf was also group therapy, and David just recently remarked how much he missed it. He is survived by his wife, Barbara, and his children, Dana, Doug, David James (DJ), Deann, and his "medical son," Norm Aleks, M.D. He is also leaves the spouses of his children, his grandchildren, his sister and two brothers. David's ashes were set to rest in Chattanooga's Military cemetery.

# The Lilac With Golden Leaves, *Syringa villosa* Vahl 'Zolotoi Amur'

PETER THE GREAT BOTANIC GARDEN | ST  
SAINT-PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

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By Gennadii Afanasëvich Firsov, PhD

(Email: [gennady\\_firsov@mail.ru](mailto:gennady_firsov@mail.ru))

Komarov Botanical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences,  
Saint-Petersburg, Russia.

The tests of representatives of the genus *Syringa* L. at Peter the Great Botanic Garden of the Komarov Botanical Institute RAS (BIN) at Aptekarsky Island at Saint-Petersburg began as early as the first half of the 18th century. *Syringa vulgaris* L. was included into the first Catalogue of the Garden published by J. Siegesbeck in 1736 (as *Syringa latifolia flore coeruleo*. *Syringa coerulea* C.B.p. Lilac. J.B.).

*Syringa villosa* Vahl is a shrub 3-4 m high from North China. Flowers pink-lilac, fading to whitish. It is valued for its dense crown, and for its late and profuse flowering. Introduced to cultivation in 1882 (Rehder, 1949). In cultivation it often produces hybrids with widely cultivated *S. josikaea* Jacq. f. ex Rchb., known as *S. ×henryi* C.K. Schneid. Flowers short-stalked, in pyramidal compact panicles, usually pubescent. Leaves pilose along the veins beneath. It differs from related species by cylindrical (or nearly so) corolla tube; anthers inserted near mouth; lobes spreading (related *S. tomentella* Bur. et Franch. has leaves soft pubescent beneath, and loose inflorescence). In Russia it is cultivated everywhere, and is considered to be smoke-hardy and resistant to pollution (Saakov, 1960). It is known at Botanic Garden BIN since 1891, and since that time it is represented here constantly and without interruption (Svjazeva, 2005). Certain specimens are of considerable age, the oldest ones more than 100 years old.



Photo of 'Zolotoi Amur' and Gennadii A. Firsov by Gennadii A. Firsov

The cultivar *Syringa villosa* Vahl 'Zolotoï Amur' ('Золотой Амур') was selected from seedlings. The seeds were received from the town of Svobodny of the Amur region (N 1983-15), collected from cultivated plants. The cultivar epithet may be translated as "the golden Amur"; it is connected with the Amur River by way of its provenance. Seeds were received in March 1982; they were sown on 5 April 1983, and germinated that year. The authors of the cultivar are Alla Kuklina and Gennady Firsov. The cultivar was included into the State Register of Russian Federation as No. 9154026 in 2010, as a result of mutual work in the field of selection, propagation and registration of this selectional achievement between Peter the Great Botanic Garden, Saint-Petersburg and Main Botanic Garden RAS, Moscow (Kuklina, Firsov, 2011).

It is a shrub of medium size with wide open crown (1.75 m in 12 years; and 2.65 m in 20 years). the width being more than the height of plant. Branchlets stout, lenticellate, grayish. Leaves oblong-rombic or broad-elliptic, acute at ends, cuneate at base, pilose from beneath. Leaves rugose, with dense net of nerves. Upper young leaves with bright yellow spots. The cultivar is characterized by intensely mottled and variegated leaves. There are bright yellow spots of different forms, free designs, peculiar borders and traits of irregular sizes on the surface of the light green leaf blades. It is especially decorative when unfolding the leaves, during the growth of shoots, in spring and at the first half of the summer. The beautiful golden design of leaves become less pronounced at the end of the vegetative season and when being planted in a shady location.

Flowers pale pink, in pyramidal erect rather dense thyrses, up to 18-20 cm long, protruding and visible, not hidden among the leaves. Flowers appear bicoloured because the flower buds are darker than open florets. With fading the florets become much more pale. Corolla 12-13 mm long; lobes spreading, elliptic, 7-9 mm in diameter. Corolla tube cylindrical, straight. The fragrance of the flowers is the same prominent fragrance as that of the related lilac species.





Photo of *Syringa villosa* 'Zolotoi Amur' by Gennadii A. Firsov

The flowering is late, usually in June – according to local Calendar of Nature (Buligin, 1982) the beginning of flowering corresponds with the First Phenostage of “Beginning of Summer”. This is one Stage of Calendar of Nature later than of *Syringa vulgaris* and its cultivars. For example, in 2015 the lilac ‘Zolotoi Amur’ began to flower on 11 June, or 13 days later than *Syringa vulgaris* ‘Marie Legraye’ (29th May), and 18 days later than the model plants of *Syringa vulgaris* (24th May), which are considered to be dendrological phenoinicators of subseason “Height of Spring”. The flowering of ‘Zolotoi Amur’ lasts about two weeks. There was only one inflorescence in 2008, now it flowers profusely. The growth of shoots stops early, so is the lignification of shoots.

There is the group of three plants at Arboretum BIN, grown from summer cuttings in 1998. They were planted in the landscape part of the Arboretum, at a well illuminated place, close to a path (plot 130), at a convenient place for observation. One specimen was planted in 2008, another two in 2012. They produce fruits. There are young plants of different age at the nursery as well.

The plants are quite winter hardy, no frost damages in recent years. They are resistant to conditions of the large city. The cultivar can be easily propagated by summer cuttings (the rooting percent up to 100%), the features being well conserved and growing well from vegetative propagation. *Syringa villosa* 'Zolotoi Amur' is suitable for living hedges, for planting in groups and as solitary specimens. Planting the shrubs in locations with full sunlight will provide the best condition for good flower production, good habit development, and the best show of its foliage.

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Photo of "Zolotoi Amur" and Gennadii A. Firsov by Gennadii A. Firsov

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*Photo credit: Debra-Lynn B. Hook*

## Bringing Up Mommy

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*By Debra-Lynn B. Hook*

*An article about the gift of Debra-Lynn spending time with her children amongst the lilacs in the Wolcott Lilac Gardens.*

When my 22-year-old daughter asked what I wanted to do for Mother's Day, I didn't know what to say.

I'd always liked the breakfast in bed, the fists full of dandelions, the homemade cards and gifts, and, in our home, the manual labor in the back yard. I liked the sense of family and the reciprocity of spirit that Mother's Day fosters. And the kale beds being edged for free.

But this year, like an increasing number of years, a majority of my children, who are 26, 22 and 18 now, wasn't anywhere near Mom's veggie garden on Mother's Day morning: The eldest was four states away, studying for grad school exams. The youngest was still at an

all-night party, after senior prom the night before. The one child who was home, the one who posed the question, was bleary-eyed, having been up until dawn celebrating her Saturday graduation from college.

It had been a heady, exhausting weekend for all of us.

“I don’t know,” I answered. “Naps?”

And so, on Mother’s Day, we slept. Or, I should say my daughter and her younger brother, who eventually came home, did. I lay down. But instead of sleeping, first I cried. I mourned how things are changing and that I might not know how to change with them. I mourned that for the first time, this valued celebration in the life of our family felt forced. Was I being silly, selfish to still want it? I let myself grieve until I fell into the cleansing sleep of Morpheus. And when I woke, I thought, “Yes, I do.” I still want Mother’s Day for me, and for all of us. But how and what, exactly, with these going, going, gone adult children? What do I want from them that they still want to give?

And I realized, then, what it is. Beyond the tangibles, beyond the flowers and the gifts and the breakfasts in bed, beyond help, even, in the yard, it is their hearts. It is that deep, human-condition connection that we all crave with each other, that we don’t even know we’re missing, that we all seem to be missing in these overwrought, disconnected times.

And so it was on my 25th Mothers Day, that I thought to ask my children and my husband to pick from among the many readings and reflections that cross our paths. We went to a public lilac garden in town where other mothers could be seen strolling with their families and loved ones. And sprawled in the grass under the shade of a mammoth rhododendron tree off the beaten path, we read aloud to one another. We told the stories of our souls, like people used to do before there was Netflix on laptops and dinner on the run, reading aloud and reflecting on writer Ann

Patchett's lessons of ritual in her life and theologian Duncan Littlefair's thoughts on the co-existence of science and religion. We contemplated the intimate relationship between the mother and daughter in the novel "Wild" and the value of leading one's life with heart instead of mind as expressed by Buddhist monk Jack Kornfield. Even my eldest Chris e-mailed a satirical piece from "The Onion" to contribute to the event -- about a man who was ridiculed because he was genuinely happy in this angst-happy age, because he never left his hometown, never lived more than two hours from his parents and lived a contented life.

On the afternoon of the second Sunday in May, my family and I read and ruminated together. We slowed the pace of our -- yes -- always-evolving lives and expressed to each other the innermost stirrings of the hearts we love most.

We also marveled at the experience and the opportunity. "I really want to do this again, and a lot," said my daughter, who knows as well as I that she will be leaving the physical home soon.

"Me, too," said her brother, who will be doing the same.

What started out as a painful Mother's Day became the ultimate mother's moment: A gift for me that became a gift for them, too.

Even if we are in other places, we realized, even if we are in other states, other countries, even if it's by Skype or Google chat, whether it's Mother's Day, a dog day in August or a blustery winter's day in January, we can always find our way back to the lilac garden in a small town in northeast Ohio. We can find a way, always, still, to be family.

Special to McClatchy Newspapers

*(Debra-Lynn B. Hook of Kent, Ohio, has been writing about family life since 1988. Visit her website at [www.debralynnhook.com](http://www.debralynnhook.com). Email her at [dlbhook@yahoo.com](mailto:dlbhook@yahoo.com), or join her column's Facebook discussion group at Debra-Lynn Hook: Bringing Up Mommy.)*

# A Celebration of Lilacs

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*By Marilyn Thordarson*

The Lilac Festival, an 80 year old celebration in Spokane, Washington, had simple roots, those of a lilac bush! Stories vary as to how lilacs made their way to Spokane. The most noteworthy relates that in 1912, John W. Duncan, superintendent of Spokane's Manito Park, while on a visit to Rochester, New York met a John Dunbar, reputed to be a widely known lilac authority. Duncan was inspired by Dunbar's stunning gardens particularly his vibrantly hued lilac bushes and transported 128 lilac cultivars back to Spokane. He donated those lilacs to the city and many can be found today in Manito Park's large Lilac Garden.

From those beginnings, the name Lilac City gained popularity with Spokanites and local garden clubs, businesses, and homeowners planted hundreds of bushes throughout the city. They can be found at the Spokane International Airport's landscaped entry to the city and in many of Spokane's nearly 100 parks!



*Photo credit: Gibby Media*



The Spokane Lilac Festival has its origins in 1938 at a gathering of women who belonged to the Associated Garden Club and Spokane Floral Society. At a combined meeting, one member raised her hand and offered, “why don’t we have a celebration associated with our lilacs?” The idea drew enthusiasm and support from Spokane residents and over the

years the Spokane Lilac Festival grew in size and reputation and today is recognized as having the largest Festival parade of its type (torchlight and honoring the military services) in the country!

In its early years, the Spokane Lilac Festival was centered on its iconic flower, the Lilac. The main event was not the parade, as it is today, but was a grand floral show in the lobby of the Historic Davenport Hotel which was filled with displays of every variety of lilacs including French, Japanese and Persian with blooms reported in *The Spokesman Review* newspaper as “15 inches tall with clusters a foot wide.”

Today, the Spokane Lilac Festival has a mission of “Recognizing Our Military, Empowering our Youth and Showcasing Our Region. As Spokane is the home of “Fairchild Air Force Base” several events and the parade honor our servicemen and women. Its royalty of high school senior women receive leadership training and become ambassadors for Spokane and are awarded college scholarships. This year, the Festival is recognizing area youth with its first annual talent show. During the year, Festival representatives and the Spokane Lilac Festival float travel throughout the Northwest to other communities and cities as ambassadors for Spokane.





*Photo by Gibby Media*

While the Festival has broadened its activities well beyond a celebration of lilacs, all aspects of the event display the many shades of the lilac blossom, including the Royalty gowns, highlights on the float and lilac bouquets at every event. Festival volunteers paint lilacs on the street on every major intersection

through which the Spokane Lilac Festival Armed Forces Torchlight Parade with 200 plus floats, bands, drill teams, classic cars make their way, entertaining crowds of over 150,000 spectators. The parade includes floats and visitors from throughout the Pacific Northwest as well as British Columbia and Alberta. Festival directors wear lilac suit jackets, and many shades of lilac t-shirts, sweatshirts as well as formal gowns can be found not only at Festival events but throughout the year.

In Spokane, the color lilac can be found; with even a few houses and front doors displaying the color. When visitors drive through the Lilac City, they will find a lilac bush integrated into the landscapes of most homes.

This year the Lilac Festival Armed Forces Torchlight Parade and other events will be held May 14-19. Spokane is very proud of its lilac heritage and will celebrate the Festival's 80th birthday with tributes to its founders and our much loved flower – the lilac!

# Welcome New Members!

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*Please welcome the following members who joined throughout 2017 and 2018:*

## 2017 NEW MEMBERS

**Arboretum of the  
Barnes Foundation**  
Merlon, PA

**Akari Shinohara**  
Hokkaido, Japan

**Dr. Andrey Vozniy**  
Moscow, Russian Federation

**Julie Ruth Newgard**  
Central City, IA

**Jim Saxton**  
Ft Wayne, IN

**Jane VanEeuwen Simpson,**  
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**Jill Sliker Horticulture**  
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**Karl Geary**  
Laotto, IN

**Jonathan Larkin**  
Hillsboro, NH

**Le Musee De Lilas**  
Saintes Georges, QC

**Patrick and Margaret Spence**  
Lake Stevens, WA

**Stephen Goda**  
Pittsburgh, PA

**Lynne Gregory**  
McDougal, ON

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**Janine Almanzor**  
Riverside, CA

**Bonnie Greene**  
Stone Ridge, NY

**Willhelm Hohoff**  
Soest, Germany

**Jim Skinner**  
Lake Forest, IL

**Sergey Razumnikov**  
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**Deb Mills**  
North Chesterfield, VA

**Susan Maney**  
Honeoye Falls, NY

**Irina Isaeva**  
St. Petersburg, Russian  
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**Janice La Joie**  
Worcester, MA

**Dr. Natalya Makedonskava**  
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## 2018 NEW MEMBERS (AS OF 3/31/18)

**Belgorod National  
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Belgorod, Russian Federation

**Oksana Chernyshova**  
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Federation

**Anna Gamurak**  
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**William Radler**, Greenfield, WI

**Natalia Savenko**, Moscow,  
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### EDITOR'S NOTES

Due to a last minute format change in the Winter 2018 Journal, there were several errors in the Membership Roster. The entire Membership Roster is being reprinted in this edition to address those errors.

At the time of printing, the ILS Convention was held so the Administrative Executive list has been updated in this edition based on election results at the convention. The full convention report will be in the Summer 2018 edition.

# Membership Roster

*As of 4/18/2018*

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*If you see any errors in your address please email our membership secretary at [membership@internationallilacsociety.org](mailto:membership@internationallilacsociety.org).*

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