

Thanks for the memories

One of the things I like best about my garden is that so many of the plants remind me of a person, place or event. Sometimes the plant was given to me by someone, or I bought it at our plant sale and know who's garden it came from, or someone recommended it. And of course ideas and inspiration are taken from every garden visited. So let me take you on a tour around my garden. [Any errors or omissions are totally due to my faulty memory.]

The first thing I see when coming out the back door is *Geranium* 'John Elsley' – I've met the real John Elsley. And the dwarf elm, *Ulmus parviflora* 'Seiju', that I bought at Gee Farms on that great trip to Michigan. Four plants from Betty French's garden all happen to be planted near each other – snow drops, chelone, *Geranium* 'AT Johnson', and feverfew. The feverfew reminds me of the time I was at a plant dig at Betty's. Betty, Tom Cottington and I were taking a little tour around the garden and Tom said he had heard that chewing the leaves of feverfew cured migranes. So naturally we all tried it. We decided that if it was true it must be because the taste was so terrible it took your mind off the headache.

Next I see two shrubs recommended by Ed Hasselkus – *Physocarpus* 'Diablo' and *Buxus* 'Green Mound'. Also the *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana Lutea' that Ed told me I'd be throwing my money away if I bought it. Ha – it made it through the winter! There's the peony I got free from Roy Klehm at one of his talks. And my little Shari Voss corner – *Artemisia* 'Limelight', *Geranium* 'Sambor', *Ruellia* (wild petunia), and a special rock she brought me. The *Clematis* 'Jackmanii' and *Geranium* 'Dilys' I bought because they looked so great in Marlette Larsen's garden.

The *Hosta* 'Frances Williams' was a must as my dad and brother were both named William Francis. And since my British daughter-in-law is named Lisa, I also had to have the *Hosta* 'Limey Lisa'. The blue columbine is from a wonderful day at Eugene Coffman's Ridge Road Nursery. *Acer shirasawarum* 'Aureum' (my favorite plant in the garden) is one of numerous beautiful things from Stonewall Nursery. Peter and Ed babysat it for me for a couple months until I had its site prepared. Those four large conifers scattered through the garden were brought home from an American Conifer Society meeting after I told Sandy and Denny Allen and Diane Scharkey that they didn't need to leave any room in the truck for me as I wouldn't be buying anything. I'll never live that down.

The stone bench idea was stolen from Stephanie O'Neal and I thought the Hummingbird clethras were from her too but on a recent visit she told me she thought they were from Tom Cottington. From Joan Severa – *Veronica* 'Bright Eyes', cimicifuga, daylilies, and a Memorial Day peony. Another Memorial Day peony from Tom Cottington, along with *Geranium macrorrhizum*, bloodroot (single and double), and apparently the clethras. There is double bloodroot and a thalictrum from Ann Munson, another special rock from Nell Cummings, primulas from Ruth Cadoret and pulmonarias from Chris Bylsma. The Buddha statue used to live in Rita Dupuis's garden. The *Epimedium* 'Rubrum' reminds me of my first visit to the Flower Factory.

My sister Mary took me so I could buy plants for my new garden and Nancy Nedveck's recommended epimedium for the shade. I really splurged that day, buying four plants for a total of \$12. My sister, who only went for my benefit and wasn't going to buy anything, spent \$130. So you see it runs in the family. I have a big clump of variegated solomon's seal from that sister. The shooting stars were dug up from my neighbor Judy Steffen's family farm. It's great having another plant nut next door. Who else would literally run across the yard with you to see if your Nellie Moser clematis was blooming yet? There's dwarf bearded iris and a geranium from Diane Scharkey, anemone from Peg Luby, *Hosta* 'Krossa Regal' from Sandy Allen, and *Hosta* 'Sea Octopus' from Bill Hoernke. The lilies are from Phyllis Sanner.

There are numerous plants from Frank Greer – berry bladder fern, epimediums, dwarf solomon's seal, vancouveria, actaea, iris cristata (unless of course this is the special iris cristata that accidentally got dug up at a plant dig, in which case I know nothing about it). My climbing hydrangea could be another Frank Greer memory if the two

starts from him hadn't both bitten the dust. So now mine is a K-Mart memory. Oh there's another shrub recommended by Ed Hasselkus—'Aglo' rhododendron. Remember that tour of Dennis Buettner's gardens in Milwaukee? At the house with the swimming pool that appeared to flow into Lake Michigan they had a whole hedge of 'Aglo' rhododendron and I overheard Ed comment that it was one of his favorites. And another reminder of that Michigan trip—a daphne and dwarf hemlocks from Arrowhead Alpines.

I have lots of reminders of Woody Plant Society plant exchanges—daphne, boxwood, rhododendron, yew. That raised bed was my son Jason's idea and he helped me build it and my son Chad determined the placement of trellises. There are Siberian iris, Jacob's ladder, and different types of trillium from my mother's garden.

I have plants from both my grandmothers' gardens. Maidenhair fern is from Grandma Linley's garden. I confess I don't actually remember seeing it in her garden but my mother remembers driving in the country with her new mother-in-law nearly 60 years ago and stopping by the side of the road to dig it up. Jack-in-the-pulpit is from my Grandma Hurd's garden. I so clearly remember her showing me the little Jacks when I was a child. Now I show those Jack's descendants to my grandson. Life doesn't get much better than that.

—Jane LaFlash