

Perennial Notes

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society (WHPS)

May 15, 1998

The most memorable gardens are those with integrity, those which express the owner's needs, preferences and passions. No matter whether they are adapted from what already existed, nor if they are expensive or cost little. Whether they are re-creations of another culture or strongly influenced by soil and aspect, if they have been refined by the continuity of effective and dedicated personal involvement they will hold together with a sense of unity. This is what I mean by "integrity." Great gardens have a spirit unique to themselves and a clear personal vision is an essential element of this.

—Jill Billington, *The Garden*, April 1998 (The Garden is the monthly publication of the Royal Horticulture Society)

Dues are way past due—if you find a dues notice with this mailing you need to renew. Otherwise, this will be your last mailing from the WHPS.

Good-by, Good luck and Happy gardening!

PLANT SALE FOR MEMBERS May 23

The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society Plant Sale for members and their friends will be held from 9:00 a.m.-Noon on May 23 in the lovely cottage garden of Molly McDermott, 1724 Parmenter St., Middleton, WI—rain or shine—just bring an umbrella.

Parmenter is the last cross street on University Avenue before the beltline and Molly's house is south of University Avenue before Parmenter starts up the hill.

Also on tour will be the grounds of St. Lukes Lutheran Church in Middleton nearby—come see what your fellow WHPS members have done for their church!

Sale will feature plants from members' gardens (thus guaranteed to be hardy, at least for someone) at bargain prices. There will be plants that are not available from any commercial growers.

There is a flier advertising the sale enclosed with this newsletter. Please share it with a friend or your whole office (we presume everyone you work with is a friend).

Our Saturday digs were a big success!! Members dug and potted hundreds of Madison-grown plants at the homes of Tom Cottingham, Joan Severra, Frank Greer, and Betty French. Many thanks to Tom Cottingham, Stephanie Bloomquist, Joan Severra, Nell Cummings, Jane La Flash, Joan Nagle, Dick Eddy, Gerhard Luetschwager, Richard Berling, Lisa Strand, Linda Dauck, Jacki Mac Laren, Janet Miller, Terri Beck-Engle, Heid Carvin, Carrol Schiller, Sandra Allen, Martha Coughlin, Diane Sharkey, Betty French and Frank Greer (please forgive A. Hort Hound if your name was left out).

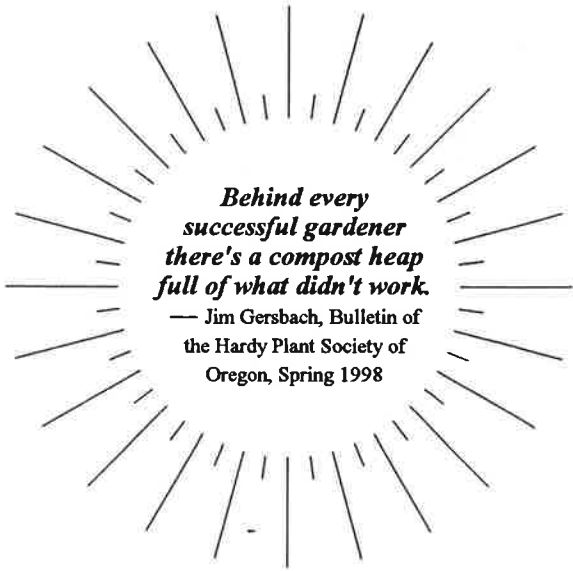
Special thanks go to Molly McDermott for hosting the sale in her lovely garden. We will have large quantities

of *Primula sieboldii*, *Geranium AJ Johnson*, *Actea Pachypoda*, *Chrysanthemum Clair Curtis*, *Epimediums*, wood poppies, sweet woodruff, *Geranium macrorhizum*, purple coneflowers, snow drops, *Lamium*, ferns.

Please bring any additional plants from your garden that you would like to donate to the sale. Digging large clumps on the morning of the sale and bringing them in plastic bags or boxes is just fine. Please do not show up without something to sell—we can sell anything!! Where else can you get a landscape size clump of *Monarda 'Marshall's Delight'* for \$2.00?? Plants can also be dropped off at Molly's anytime on Friday.

Save all those little cardboard boxes your mail order plants have arrived in this spring, and bring them to Saturday's sale to carry off all the treasures you and others are going to buy.

For the 200 members who weren't able to help with the digs, we could use some additional help with set up on May 22 (3 PM to early evening to sort, label and transport plants), supply coffee and sweets for the morning of the sale, help with sales and raking in the money, and clean up (these folks will be here until the bitter end-12 noon on May 23). Call Tom Cottingham (836-7033) or Terry Beck-Engel (244-0467).



*Behind every
successful gardener
there's a compost heap
full of what didn't work.*

— Jim Gersbach, Bulletin of
the Hardy Plant Society of
Oregon, Spring 1998

COMING EVENTS

June 13, 1998

All day tour to the Bickelhaupt Arboretum, Clinton, Iowa, with the Wisconsin Woody Plants Society. Stops will also be made at Bald Eagle Nursery (ornamental grasses) and the private garden of Randy Dykstra. See enclosed for directions and information including how to reserve your \$5.00 box lunch. We will meet at 0700 in the parking lot of Nakoma Plaza (in front of the defunct Kohl's) for all of those who would like to car pool. Otherwise, get yourself to the Bickelhaupt by 1000.

June 24-July 2, 1998

Tour of the gardens of England. It's too late to sign up, but those of us who are going will surely tell you all about it.

July, 1998

Tour of area gardens. Details forthcoming. Does anyone want to volunteer for a tour? It is really not that much work. (Ha, Ha)

July 26, 1998 PM

Join the WHPS for a tea and garden tour of Taliesen in Spring Green. Details to be announced.

August 19, 1998 6 PM

Pot luck supper at Olbrich Gardens. At the October 1997 business meeting, the WHPS voted to donate \$2000 towards the purchase of plants for the new perennial garden. Come see the results! Also take time to admire Jeff Epping and staffs' wonderful achievements with outdoor containers

September 5, 1998

Second annual "Great Perennial Divide" for members only. Details to be announced.

September 16, 1998 7 PM, Olbrich Gardens.

Dane County's own Olive Thompson will speak on Primroses for Wisconsin Gardens.

October 10, 1998 830 AM to 430 PM. Gardening with Bulbs. Olbrich Gardens. A one day symposium with four national speakers. There will be a \$45 fee to attend this event. Featured Speakers: Brent Heath, Mike Heger, Galen Gates and Scott Kunst. See March '98 newsletter for details.

October 21, 1998 7 PM Olbrich Gardens.

Upstairs Meeting Room Annual Business Meeting. A slide show on highlights of the gardener's year will also take place.

October 25, 1998 1-4 PM

Upstairs meeting room Olbrich Gardens. Members seed exchange and workshop.

November 18, 1998 7 PM Olbrich Gardens.

Upstairs Meeting Room. The Garden Bench—It's History and Use in Garden Design. Martha Glowacki and Mary Dickey.

December 9, 1998 7 PM Olbrich Gardens, Commons.

Fun with Flowers and Film. Jerry Gerloff. Come learn about photographing your garden and view Jerry's artistry with flowers on film.

January 17, 1999 11AM-2PM

Annual potluck brunch with the Hosta Society at Olbrich Gardens. John Cannon and John Frisch will present a slide and music show based on the WHPS summer trip to the glorious gardens of England. Pam Duthie (Chicago Botanical Garden) will speak on What Midwesterners Can Learn from the Gardens of England.

EVENTS TO DREAM ABOUT

February 17, 1999 Olbrich Gardens.

Tony Avent, Plant Delights Nursery—this is going to happen

November 6, 1999 Olbrich Gardens.

An all day symposium on Great Shady Gardeners. We have John Mickel (author of the new book Ferns for American Gardens), New York Botanical Garden, signed up as a speaker. Other speakers may include Darryl Probst (epimediums and tricyrtis) and Paul Held (primroses and hepaticas) and perhaps Mark Zillis (hostas)

November, 2000 Olbrich Gardens. Gardening from the Catalog—Dan Hinckley Heronwoods Nursery, Tony Avent Plant Delights Nursery (committed), Roy Klehm, Klehm Nursery, and maybe one more. This event has a good chance of happening!

So much is planted to create a green tapestry that is subtle, sophisticated, subdued, submerged and somniferous, and ultimately stultifying. Gardens are designed with such alleged elegance that there are actually no flowers at all. Plants are being micro-propagated that go directly from bud to seed head without ever truly blooming, so as not to give offense to the eye by actually having color. (Variegation, of course, not withstanding). Gardeners who are afraid of color give me a twinge. Very like going to a gourmet restaurant to dine with a vegetarian who is allergic to wheat and root vegetables. What is the point? Why eat? Why garden?

—Dr. Fenton Fescue, Bulletin of the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon, Spring, 1998 (Obviously, Fenton Fescue is an alias of some sarcastic plantophile)



Garden Tiddles

This past winter A. Hort Hound had the opportunity to spend a Saturday at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. I spent a couple of hours in the Egyptian collection where I especially enjoyed the funerary objects. The Egyptians truly believed that you could take it with you—they loaded their tombs with objects for the after life, and if something was large, they just included a scaled down version or a model of the object. They made miniature scenes of bakeries, wineries, and butcher shops to insure they would eat well in the next life. One model that caught my eye, was a small cloistered scene which included a long reflecting pool and a half a dozen trees, probably fig. This was obviously a cool, shady area and it dawned on me that the pharaoh was just taking his shade garden with him to the under world. I suppose we could all do that with our own gardens, don't you think so?

The Chicago Lyric Opera's production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* this winter was magnificent. Act three takes place in a beautiful moonlit rose garden which includes three rose covered arbors and two rose covered gazebos, where many of the plotting characters hide and spy on one another. The scene includes an ass and a marvelous fireworks display in the finale. Actually, most of Mozart's operas have scenes which occur in wonderful gardens. Wouldn't it be nice if 20th century movies occurred somewhere else besides the bedroom? This is not to say, however, that Mozart's operas do not have the requisite bedroom scene.

The spring of 1998 was a sharp contrast to the one of 1997, or even 1996 for that matter. A. Hort Hound's first daffodil bloomed on April 23 in 1997, but on April 23, 1998, the daffodils had peaked and the mid-season tulips were at their best. (Actually, the first daffodil ever appeared on April 7th, though more than ten years ago this occurred on March 22, that year far back into memory when the high at the end of March was 90 degrees) Martagon lilies, the earliest emerging of lilies, were actually 6 inches tall on the 29th of March. The late season tulips climaxed in early May and the heavy rains early in the month played havoc with these beauties as well as flattening large stands of *Primula sieboldii*.

In 1997 there were no lilacs for Mother's Day—they had yet to bloom. For Mother's Day 1998 there were also no lilacs—they had already bloomed!! (Ok, this is an exaggeration for the sake of the story—those of you at the Friends of the Arboretum's plant sale know that the lilacs were lovely Mother's Day weekend) The early spring bulbs, particularly *Chionodoxa* and *Daffodil Tete Tete* were never more beautiful, and all agreed that this was a spectacular year for the flowering magnolias—not one hint of frost damage. The Memorial Day Peony (*Paeonia Smouthii*) bloomed a full 10 days before its namesake.

It was a spectacular spring for *Epimediums* and it was very difficult to cut back the foliage of the evergreen varieties as the leaves came through the winter in such fine shape. Joan Severra finally found the time to redo her pond, and Tom Cottington finished the excavation of plants from the site of the new addition to his home.

One WHPS member (who shall go unnamed) had the audacity to showup at the Flower Factory several hours before its grand opening on April 25 and was allowed to select items from her wish list. Want to know why there was no *Adonis* or *Cimicifuga Atropurpurea* 'Hillside Beauty' when you got there? Hope everyone remembers this next year and we will rush the place at 0700.



Over the years I have made a practice of viewing my garden from inside the windows of my home. I have come to notice how each frames a particular view. I take note of changes to improve the view--an accent plant is needed here, a background planting is needed there to screen out my neighbor's junk pile, or that old pine tree is really well past its glory. I make a plan of action, developing a list of possible solutions to these problems.

When one becomes homebound due to the weather or illness, I find this provides my best opportunities for reflection and creative thinking (other than actually working out in the garden). I will pull out plant catalogs, notepaper, and even photographs of my garden. I even make time to read those magazines and books that I bought many months before, searching for new ideas.

One of the best times for observing my garden through the window is in the evening as day becomes night, or even on nights when there is a full moon. I look for the effects of light and shadow that reveal details overlooked or seldom noticed, like flowers that glow paradoxically as the light fades. It's also exciting to view the garden in the early morning and watch as light and dancing shadows etch an ever changing image on the painting framed by the window which is my garden. I watch my garden awaking to a new day, each and every day. At these times I notice very small things like the texture of a plant with its opening new flowers, an awakening bumble bee, the flight of a ruby-throated hummingbird sipping nectar from a columbine, a giant swallow tail butterfly flying high above the garden phlox, fireflies as they flash their mating lights in the darkening shadows--all of these are special moments and make gardening so wonderful.

For thirty years I have been looking at the ever changing view through the window. It is a source of great inspiration and new ideas before a tool is ever lifted. Visual pruning and planting consumes little energy but provides new dreams and opportunities for growth and change.

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

MEMBERSHIP 1998

NAME _____

ADDRESS () change in address

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

- INDIVIDUAL.....\$8.00
 FAMILY.....\$12.00
 BUSINESS.....\$25.00 (includes 1 free ad in newsletter)
 I have included a few extra dollars for further support to the society's programs.

I am interested in helping out with the following activities:

- Programs Plant Sale Mailings Community Projects
 WHA-TV Gardening Expo Publications Tours Hospitality

Other local plant societies I belong to:

Expertise I have that may be useful to the Society: computer, journalism, publishing, public relations, horticulture, landscape profession, etc.:

Please mail completed form and checks made out to The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society (WHPS): Richard Bloomquist, 5743 Wilshire Drive, Madison, WI 53711; 274-8326

*If lawn mowing
feels like copying
the same sen-
tence over and
over, gardening*



*is like writing out new ones, an
infinitely variable process of
invention and discovery.
Gardens also teach the neces-
sary if un-American lesson that
nature and culture can be
compromised, that there might
be some middle ground between
the lawn and the forest--
between those who would
complete the conquest of the
planet in the name of progress,
and those who believe it's time
we abdicated our rule and left
the earth in the care of its most
innocent species. The garden
suggest there might be a place
we can meet nature halfway.*

—Second Nature, Michael Pollan

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

925 Waban Hill
Madison, WI 53711

President—Frank Greer
Vice President—Dick Eddy
Recording Secretary—Stephanie Bloomquist
Treasurer—Richard Bloomquist, Treasurer
Chairman, Ways and Means Committee—
Tom Cottingham
Chairman, Travel Committee—Ed Hasselkus
New Board Members at Large
Betty French
Diane Sharkey
Terri Beck-Engel