



Manitoba Lily Connection

Manitoba Regional Lily Society Newsletter
www.manitobalilies.ca

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Affiliated with the North American Lily Society

September 2004

President's Message

Hello everyone.

Today is September 1st and there are lilies blooming in my garden! *L. lancifolium*, *L. lancifolium* 'Flore Plena', *L. henryi* var. *citrinum*, about 6 orientpets and even an asiatic. Also, *L. leichtlinii* var. *maximowiczii*, a poor/pale representative of the species, but tall, finished a week ago. The heavy rain helped the last flower shed its petals.

What a growing season! "If you happen to know where summer went, let me know." I'd like to go there for some warmth and dryness and maybe convince it to join us for a nice long fall. Long cool wet spring, cool summer, it is looking like a wet cool fall! As we gardeners like to say, "There is always next year." There is a particular class of plants that seem to have done extremely well this cool wet year. Unfortunately, they are in a class called weeds.

Fall is not officially here yet, but it is that time of year to start thinking about dividing and transplanting our perennials or buying some perennials and spring bulbs (which are in the stores already). But most important, it is the time of our Annual Fall Lily Bulb Sale. The bulb sale committee has been busy ordering a very good selection of bulbs for this year's sale. Perhaps buy a few extra bulbs to plant for next year's NALS Show and Convention in Winnipeg. Remember, we want to have everyone bring in 10 stems each for the show. If you want to bring more than 10 stems, Please Do! Our aim is '1000' stem for 2005. I will be bringing lily stems to show the wonderful lilies we can grow here in 'cool chilly Manitoba'. (the orientpets are especially richly coloured)

See you at the Sale!

Ted Sobkowich

Lily Questions?

If you have a question or thought on lilies just contact me, 'the editor' and I will publish it on a question and answer spot in the newsletters.

Let me know what else you would like to see published in your newsletter

E-mail: strohman@mb.sympatico.ca or Phone: 476-2536

Mail: Nigel Strohman, Box 846, Neepawa, MB R0J 1H0

Question & Answer

Q: My lilies have made a large clump but now only have a couple of blooms per stem. What can I do to improve them?

A: It is time to dig them up and divide them as they are too crowded and are starving for nutrients. The best time to move them if they are asiatics or LA hybrids is when they have matured in the Fall, from September 15th - Oct 15th.

Inside:

Prairie Lily Breeders: - Page 2-3

Novice Niche: Planting your New Lilies - Page 3-4

NALS 2004 Report - Page 4-5

MRLS Lily Show Report - Page 6

Bulb Sale Report - Page 6-7

Upcoming Events - Page 8

**Prairie Lily Breeders:
Eugene Fox: Blooming Lilies
Gail Fox Millet, Alberta**

From childhood Gene was interested in flowers and in lilies for almost as long. However, it took home ownership and a yard of his own to get him buying bulbs and desiring to learn more about lilies. That was about 1962. Family photos from 1965 onward reveal mature clumps of lilies in the backgrounds. At this juncture, an article on the great plant and lily hybridizer, Robert Simonet, appeared in the Edmonton Journal. The actual idea of hybridizing lilies specifically was planted in Foxy's brain by that article.

Work, a post graduate education and family responsibilities all conspired to keep gardening to a minimum for many years. Then, from 1971 onward Gene and I owned a farm as a country retreat from the city of Edmonton. The retreat became too attractive and the city residence was sold. Gradually, the garden plots began to expand on the farm. Each year more perennials were planted and new lily bulbs were planted. Most early bulb acquisitions were from garden supply shops and spring or fall sales at Kresge's or Woolworth's department stores. A good measure of these were "Mid-Century, Jagra hybrid" bulbs packaged and shipped in display boxes by Oregon Bulb Farms for resale by commercial vendors. The "Jagra" on the label was a contraction of Jan de Graaff. Some of those early bulbs were: 'Halloween', 'Sunray', 'Firebrand', 'Vanguard' and 'Cherub'. We still have bulbs from all these cultivars growing in our gardens. Martagons came to Gene's attention somewhat indirectly about this time through Ed Robinson's Gaybird Nursery catalog. We had been interested in getting various flowering crabs and apple trees for landscaping. Gaybird listed not only trees, but also Asiatic lilies and martagons. Several martagons were purchased almost yearly during those times. Twenty-five years later, those martagons still persist. They have been vastly augmented by two decades of Gene's own planned-crosses, martagon seeds from around the world and martagon bulb and pollen acquisitions.

Shortly thereafter, Gene read about two Saskatchewan mail order firms: Honeywood Lilies and Riverside Gardens. Hence, Porter and Patterson lilies were purchased. From then on, lots of

importations were made from the USA, England, Scotland, Germany and from down under.

Gene said, "I thought my lily fascination was unique and longed for some more information and went to the library and with several lily books continued the journey." By the late 1970s contacts were made with a few people who knew about NALS and about Fred Fellner. A first visit was made to Mr. Fellner's lily fields about that time.

"What a marvelous sight that was... tens of thousands of vigorous upfacing lilies blooming over a huge acreage. Nothing had prepared me for the size and the impact of the color. What an inspiration to continue with lilies," remembers Gene.

Along with amassing lily cultivars, Gene was avidly collecting books on lilies and books on breeding herbaceous perennials. No used bookstore anywhere was neglected as most books on lilies have been out of print for decades and some for over 100 years. He acknowledges NALS as the single best source of information and contacts. As Gene was at the University of Alberta as a professor, he secured permission to take or audit courses in genetics and microbiology. He also made friends with some staff in those areas who were generous in giving him their personal time to discuss or demonstrate technical matters.

Annual treks to NALS and regional shows in various US and Canadian cities and garden visits to breeders and growers were enlightening. Taking judges' training and apprenticing with the giants in hybridizing, showing and growing was a real education for him, also. Gene says, "you learn at the show tables, the banquet tables and the breakfast tables. No hybridizer should act in isolation."

Before 1980, Gene was yearly making a dozen or so planned and protected crosses. By 1984, the actual number of crosses rose dramatically and included mostly Asiatic and martagon hybrids. His goals for hybridizing Asiatics and martagons were broad because of his reading and NALS experience. He keeps a huge basic gene pool comprised of thousands of his own selected seedlings from past years that have proved to have:

1. Botrytis and disease resistance,
2. Stem and pedicel strength,
3. Balanced inflorescence and uncrowded floral placement,
4. Vigorous foliage,

(Continued on page 3)

5. One or more novel features or qualities which differ from existing registered lilies.

He also has some personally selected seedling lilies for breeding work that came from such persons as Fred Fellner, Fred Tarlton, Alex Burnett, Norgart Martschinke, Otto Beutnagel and others. Each year Gene decides on a few specific major breeding emphases for his Asiatic work. For example, in 1988 his emphasis was on tall 1c whites and also on inter species breeding. In 1989, some 3100 seedlings from the crosses of 1988 were planted out. From that work, a tall, eggshell white, unspotted and relaxed turkschap is being increased for introduction. It is elegant. Also a smashing, ultra early coral, la derived from *L. wilsoni* x *L. pumilum* is being propagated for release. It is the first, quality Asiatic to bloom every year and what a beautiful, glowing harbinger of the season!

The major breeding emphasis for each year is different, but long-term goals are carried forward in addition. In 1989, two specific goals were 1. colorfast pink and 2. high bud count racemous inflorescences. To get to that stage, Gene had coded all his pink lilies with a code that reflected the number of sunny days that a pink bloom would retain its color. Some named pink cultivars such as 'Bonnie' and 'Malta' were used as were many of his own pink, rose, lilac/pink and cherry colored seedlings. Just over 1500 seedlings were planted from those crosses in 1990. They resulted in many pinks, but only 3 remarkably fade proof pinks. Only one of the three, a lb in a spotless, but vibrant lilac pink was superior in all factors. It is being watched and increased. It will be named and released if it measures up to all health parameters. Visitors to our gardens have clamored for it, so Gene feels that it should be popular.

Over the years, I too, have taken an active interest and enjoyment in the lilies. Every late afternoon during bloom season, we tour our 6 or 7 acres of lilies together and are always evaluating seedlings and selections. A few martagons and a few Asiatic hybrids have been registered and released. Gene also enlists my help when we select lily stem entries for the show bench. That provides a little extra spice and excitement.

Novice Niche

Planting Your New Lilies!

Now that Fall is approaching as well as the MRLS Fall bulb sale. The lilies that you will pick up or order will need to be tended to right away. Lily bulbs are never completely dormant like tulips or daffodils. These are fresh and ready to go, so they must be planted as soon as possible.

If for some reason you are unable to plant your bulbs immediately, then keep them refrigerated until you can plant them. Store them in a poly bag in slightly damp peat moss in the crisper of the fridge. There is only a short time before ground freeze up. The more growing and becoming established the bulb will do before freeze up, the better it will be able to withstand the rigors of a long, cold winter.



(1) **Location:** It is important to choose the right location. Lilies require direct sunlight for part to all of the day. They also require "Well Drained Soil". A medium sandy loam soil with a reasonable amount of humus is ideal. Peat moss can also be added. Heavy soils can be lightened with coarse sand and peat moss. If using manure make sure it is well rotted and use as top dress only, otherwise it can cause damage to the bulbs by lowering their disease resistance.

(2) **Planting:** Most lilies should be planted to a depth of 6" and 12-16" apart. Trumpets and orientals should be planted to a depth of 8" for extra winter protection. Place your lily bulb with its roots down and scale points up. A little bone meal may be added at this time. Cover with your soil mixture. Pack the soil in well around your bulb. Lilies make a nice show if

they are planted in triangular groups of 3 per variety.

(3) **Watering:** It is important to thoroughly water your bulbs in after planting, so the soil settles around the bulb to prevent any air pockets.

(4) **Labeling:** It is wise to mark each bulb planted with a stake and a weather resistant marker, so as not to damage the lily shoots in the spring when working around your lily bulbs.

Asiatic Hybrids: These lilies are hardy to zone 2 and very easy to grow. They come in all shades and color combinations. These hybrids multiply rapidly and bloom over a long season. The flowers can be up-facing, side-facing or down-facing, vary in height and flower mid season.

Martagon Hybrids: These dainty flowered ones are fast becoming popular, with as many as 50 flowers on tall erect stems with whorled leaves. These lilies often take a year to settle in and are known to sulk the first growing season, sometimes not showing any presence until the next growing season. Once established in the border or garden they can be left alone for many years. They are the only lilies that prefer dappled shade.

Oriental, Trumpet and Aurelians: These varieties are the most exotic and showy of all lilies. These varieties multiply more slowly. They can be grown on the prairies but it takes a little more effort on your part of amending the soil and providing heavier winter protection of straw, leaves and peat moss. Spring planting of these groups allows them to settle in and are more apt to make it through the winter. Protecting them from the first frosts, by covering them with a cardboard box will allow the bulbs to mature more fully for the following year. These large beautiful scented flowers that bloom late summer will be well worth the extra effort needed.

Orienpet - Longipet - L.O. Hybrids: These lilies are breakthroughs in the lily hybridizing world giving improved hybrid vigor and large showy flower. They are proving more hardy than their parents, the orientals, trumpets and longiflorums. However these

should be mulch after planting to aid in over wintering.

Species: Species lilies require specialized care due to their different natural growing conditions through-out the world. Anyone endeavoring to grow these varieties needs to research their growing requirements. Species bulbs for the most part are smaller than hybrid varieties, but will produce good quality stems and blooms. Their delicate, beautiful flowers will be well worth the effort required.



NALS Show 2004 Report

By: Sandy Venton

The NALS show in St. Louis was held from June 23rd to the 27th. Ted and I arrived in St. Louis on the Wednesday, found our rooms, and immediately hit the Hospitality Suite, where all our friends and acquaintances were getting together. There was great finger food and beverages, and we all got caught up with our friends and acquaintances.

Entry tags were filled out and completed, and final touches were made to all entries during the day. Thursday morning and afternoon were spent at the Board of Directors meeting, but I understand that there were some great tours of St. Louis and the Old Town St. Charles offered to attendees.

That evening we were taken to the Muny Theatre,

(Continued on page 5)

which is an open-air theatre, something like our Rainbow Stage, however, it holds 12,000 people. They reserve 600 seats which are given free to persons who would otherwise be unable to attend. What a nice thing to do! Amazingly, there were 4 airplane propellers set up at each of the 4 corners of the theatre which moved the air around. It is quite hot and humid in St. Louis, and apparently these propellers, which are almost soundless, create an air movement for the comfort of the patrons.

We were served a very nice buffet dinner alfresco at the Theatre, and taken on a tour backstage prior to the play, which was, interestingly enough, "Meet Me in St. Louis". We all enjoyed it immensely.

Friday morning the judges and clerks got together in the Show Hall for instruction, and then came the judging. Although it was not the largest NALS show that I attended (I think that Edmonton in 1995 was the largest), there was an acceptable number of entries, and, dear to my heart, a goodly number of martagons. Art Evans, from Gravette, Arkansas, as usual, backed up the truck and carried off a huge load of awards for his orientpets.

Also on Friday were two tours of the Monsanto Research facility. Unfortunately, we were unable to take in either of them what with meetings and seminars.

What I found odd during one of the tours to the Missouri Botanical Gardens (which is a wonderful place to visit – wish we had more time to spend there) was that their asiatics were mostly finished, the martagons were history, and the orientpets were on their way out. Their season is so very much earlier than ours – by a month at least. But the rest of the Gardens, and the various other public gardens we visited had lovely displays of flowers, which of course are very important as companion plantings.

After the judging and lunch, we attended various seminars. Carolyn Hawkins demonstrated flower arranging, a physiotherapist came to tell us about the proper way to prepare for physical labour in the garden, and one of the head gardeners of the Missouri Botanical Gardens who looks after the plantings of lilies, irises, daylilies explained to us how they use

the "layering" technique of planting bulbs. There was a Species Lily meeting which I attended, and various other NALS meetings which were open to all members.

Friday night was the Research Auction and Banquet. There were a great number of prizes on which to bid. Ted and I of course couldn't keep our hands in our pockets and bid on one of Eugene Fox's new martagons (what was the name???). Eugene was good enough to tell us that because both of us had bid on it, that he would send us 2 bulbs, one each. Interestingly enough, Eugene bid and obtained the MRLS donation (the absolutely stunning crystal vase with the herons and reeds and water engraved on it) for his wife. Apparently he wasn't going to leave without it, and there was some heated bidding going on over it. I believe that it sold for well over \$200.00 U.S. We were laughing about it later – Ted and I paid US dollars for the Canadian martagon, and Eugene paid U.S. dollars for the Canadian MRLS donation. Oh well, it went to a worthy cause.

Saturday had more seminars and tours, all of which were very informative and entertaining. And Saturday night was the Awards Banquet. Johan Mak from Mak-Leek Inc. in Oregon was the dinner speaker, and he gave a Powerpoint show on his subject "Is Breeding a Fashion? Or is it Sexy?" Awards were given out, and again, nobody won the MRLS Award for 12 stems, and I brought it back with me to Winnipeg, hopefully for the last time.

There was a final Directors Meeting on Sunday morning first thing, and there were also further tours for those people who were staying on. Ted and I left St. Louis, ended up in Toronto, missed our connection to Winnipeg, stayed overnight in Toronto, and came home to Winnipeg on Monday morning. That was the only bad part of the entire trip.

All in all, it was a very nice NALS Show, and it was great to get together with friends from other regions, and other countries.

I hope that our 2005 NALS Show in Winnipeg goes as smoothly as the 2004 NALS in St. Louis.

Sandy Venton

MRLS 20th Annual Lily Show

Held in conjunction with the
Neepawa & Area Lily Festival
Neepawa, MB
July 16th - 18th, 2004

Number of entries 95
Number of Arrangements 12
Number of Exhibitors 19

AWARDS:

Criddle Award (Best Stem of a Cultivated Species) Lilian Lukey - *L. philadelphicum*

Directors Award (Best Stem in Show)
Glenda McPhee - *Sterling Star*

Prairie Pride Award (Best Stem in the Show Developed by a Prairie Breeder)
Sandy Venton - *Towering Delight*

Ed Robinson Award (Best Martagon in the Show)
Sandy Venton - *Towering Delight*

William Silversides Award (Best Named Asiatic in the Show)
Glenda McPhee - *Sterling Star*

Dr. F. L. Skinner Award (Best Stem Grown from Seed & Exhibited by the Breeder)
Ed Czarnecki - *Seedling*

Thomas and Lynn Smith Award (Best Trumpet in the Show)
No Entry

Jean Erickson Award (Best Interspecific Hybrid in the Show)
Barrie Strohmman - *Club House*

Junior Design Award (Best Design in Section J)
No Entry

Design Award (Best Design in Section K)
Glenda McPhee - *Green Door*

Orange Lodge Award (Best orange Lily)
Barrie Strohmman - *Club House*

Manitoba Regional Lily Society Annual Fall Bulb Sales

Newsletter Notes

By: B. J. Jackson

The time is almost here! The annual fall bulb sales are fast approaching. This will be your last opportunity to purchase bulbs for showing for NALS 2005. Show Chair John Rempel is looking for members and the public to show 1,000 stems so come on out and pick out some bulbs that will rock the lily world with their beauty.!

Because of its great success last year, we will again be offering the 10% member discount this year. It is also being extended to include the mail order offering which is being expanded this year (check for the listing elsewhere in this newsletter). Don't miss out!

The Winnipeg sale is being held on Saturday and Sunday, September 25th and 26th at the Assiniboine Park Conservatory, 2355 Corydon Avenue, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Brandon sale follows the next weekend, October 2nd, at the Town Centre, 800 Rosser Avenue on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Finally, the Dauphin sale will be held Saturday, October 9th in the Market Place Mall from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This will give members and friends plenty of opportunities to pick up that special bulb to show next year or to enjoy in the garden.

There will be an excellent selection of bulbs of all colors, sizes and descriptions again this year. The Bulb Sale Committee has been working overtime to bring you the best selection we can from suppliers all across Canada. There will be something for everyone including an assortment of asiatic hybrids (including a historic section from Canadian hybridizers) as well as species, martagons and longiflorum-asiatic hybrids. Everything from the smallest pot or border asiatics like 'Yellow Babies' to the tall, floriferous and fragrant orienpets like 'American Spirit' will be on offer. Approx. 50% have not been offered before.

We also need volunteers in all three locations to help with bagging, set-up on Friday night (Winnipeg only), then the sale day(s), a few hours or the whole sale, many hands make light work. So contact the person listed below in your sale area to put your name on the list. Come out, help out, buy some new bulbs, meet your lily friends, make new lily friends... HAVE A GREAT TIME!

Winnipeg: Contact Jennifer Bishop, jb@dataways.com, Phone: Days 954-2013 or Evenings 204-661-5036

Brandon: Joan Svenson, 728-9036

Dauphin: B. J. Jackson, jacksonb@brandonu.ca or phone 761-3973

So, please come on down to the location nearest you or participate in the expanded mail order program. The annual fall bulb sales are the main funding project of the year for the Society. With your support we will make NALS 2005 the biggest and best ever. Let's show everyone that MRLS and its 200 plus members REALLY ROCK!!!!!!!!!!!!

Notices:

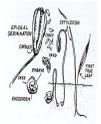
Bulb Sale Notice:

Going to have a few spare bulbs after digging this Fall? How about donating them to the MRLS Fall Bulb Sales? All bulb donations welcomed!! "Proceeds of the sales goes towards Lily research and development, subsidizing guest speakers that are brought in for Spring seminars and NALS 2005 Show in Winnipeg."

Please contact Jennifer Bishop at 204-954-2013, email: jb@dataways.com, for varieties that you will have, or bring them in to one of the bulb sales. Your donations are greatly appreciated.



Lily Trading Post



Looking for 'Quadroon' a Jean Ericksen lily, and 'Desert Rose' a Ed Robinson lily. Any one with a bulb or two please contact Lillian Luky at 204-548-2203. Lillian has brought both of these to some of the earlier MRLS Fall bulbs sales.

Looking for that special lily! Just drop me (the Editor) a note or email and we will publish your lily desires. Ph:204-476-3225
E-mail: nigel@lilynook.mb.ca

NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL

If you wish to receive your future newsletters by e-mail, sign up by e-mailing the Newsletter editor, nigel@lilynook.mb.ca
Your newsletter will be sent to you in Adobe .PDF format.

Coming Events

Manitoba Regional Lily Society Fall Bulb Sales

Location 1
**Assiniboine Park
Conservatory Lobby
September 25th & 26th, 2004
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
2355 Corydon Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

Location 2
**Town Centre Mall
Brandon, Manitoba
October 2nd, 2004
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Location 3
**Dauphin Marketplace Mall
Dauphin, Manitoba
October 9th, 2004
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Remember to bring your enclosed coupon
or membership card for 10% savings

**N.A.L.S. 58th Lily Show
'Northern Horizons'
Hosted by Manitoba Regional Lily Society
July 2005 Winnipeg, MB**

We need YOU!! If you are interested in
volunteering and helping out contact John Rem-
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