



Canadian Prairie Lily Society

Newsletter

March 2003

Number 101

CPLS: the early years - a founding member's memories!

By Herb Sunley

Letters went forth on **March 14th, 1967** to a large number of lily growers in various areas of Saskatchewan. Ten lily enthusiasts responded to the call and met in the Horticulture Headerhouse on the University Campus in Saskatoon, on April 1st, 1967. Thus Father Maurice Doll, Mrs. Don MacPhedran, Don MacPhedran, Edward A. Maginnes, Russell B. McCombs, Eugene Mossman, Stuart H. Nelson, Albert J. Porter, Gene L. Smithson and Herbert Sunley, formed the Lily Committee. This group elected Father M. Doll as the chairman, H.E. Sunley co-chairman and E.A. Maginnes as the first secretary. During the first meeting it was decided that with the help of the University of Saskatchewan, the Lily Committee would stage a Centennial Lily Show in Saskatoon on July 13 and 14, 1967 in the auditorium of Kirk Hall, on the University Campus.

There were 91 stems in the Competitive classes, 123 stems in the non-competitive displays of Jan de Graaff, Don & Mrs. MacPhedran, "Pops" Russell B. McCombs, Harold D. Olson, and Bert Porter of Honeywood Nursery and the University display of Patterson Hybrids, for a total of 214 entries as a blaze of colour. This spectacular display served to show the many visitors a brand new concept of the genus *Lilium*.

Percy H. Wright joined the Committee at the meeting being held on July 13, 1967, in Kirk Hall, especially for the concern over conflicting names given to certain Patterson hybrid seedlings. It was decided that to help

overcome this problem each of the members would send the Department of Horticulture Science one bulb of each of their Patterson hybrids. The 311 bulbs received in September 1967 were planted in comparison beds: and they have been of value and the work was still in progress during 1997. This meeting also decided that the 10 Patterson seedlings Brick Rose (55-48), Rose Marie, Honey Queen, Mahogany Mauve, Snowdrop, Twisted Petal Pink, Laura, Scented Yellow, Old Spice and Fairy Pink, would be described and registered with the Royal Horticultural Society in 1968 or 1969.

The Lily Committee asked the University of Saskatchewan if it would like to host a second lily show during July of 1968.

It is worth mentioning that, during 1967, Arther E. Delahey bought out the stock of lilies which were growing on the Patterson Estate from the Oblate Fathers. The Oblate Fathers had previously bought the Estate from Laura Patterson when they purchased the Patterson residence. The Patterson residence itself consisted of the whole block from 112th Street to 113th Street, and from Egbert Avenue to Rita Avenue. These lilies were planted at 18 Pony Trail, Riverside Country Estates, to become known as Riverside Gardens.

Father Maurice Doll phoned H.E. Sunley during mid July 1966 and asked Sunley what he would do if he had an upfacing white lily. "I would probably go

crazy". "It would be the first upfacing white lily to have been bred". During the summer of 1967, I went to the Patterson Residence to see Father Doll and his lilies. He was working in the lily patch. I walked down the path towards him and on the way I noticed a long row of single leaf seedling growth. When I got to him I asked him about the seedling row. He thought for a moment and then said as he looked at me, "I scaled that upfacing white lily which I asked you about last July". You could have pushed me over with a feather. I was so surprised that I was voiceless for a few seconds. Later I found out that someone had tried to get the whole clump of a song. This seedling became 'William White' in 1974, and it turned out there was a very pale pink sibling with it.

Arthur E. Delahey and David E. Robinson joined the Committee on **March 16, 1968**. Father M. Doll resigned as the chairman, but he remained as a member of the committee; Herbert E. Sunley was elected as chairman, Albert J. Porter co-chairman and Edward A. Maginnes as the secretary for the 1968 and later shows. There was sufficient interest among the Lily Committee members for it to raise the prospect of forming a lily society. Mrs Laura Patterson, the widow of Dr. Cecil F. Patterson, gave guidance to the Committee, and sufficient information was collected to register the following lilies in 1969; 'Cardinal Beauty' (formerly called Crimson Beauty), 'Tiger Queen'(Crimson Queen), 'Cohoe', 'Honey Queen', 'Indian Lady'(Old Spice), Snowdrop and Northern Spendor (50-307-16) were registered in 1969; as the beginning of our commitment to name and register.

Father M. Doll heard Jehovah's call from the Peace River Area in **1969**. We were back to 12 members for 1970 after the loss of Friar Maurice Doll.

Mr. W.J.L. (Len) Harvey wanted the Lily Committee to hold its competitive show with the Saskatoon Horticulture Society under the Grandstand during the Saskatoon Exhibition from July 15 to 17, 1969; this was too early for a competitive lily show. The Committee decided to put on a good display, including a large poster covered with 8"x10" coloured photographs of recently registered Patterson lilies. It was excellent advertising for the Competitive Show being held in the auditorium of Kirk Hall on July 21 & 22, 1969; and that show had a very good turn out. There was 258 entries and 16 exhibitors for the competitive stems in 1969.

The meeting of **April 10, 1970** was held at the

Headerhouse. It was moved by Percy H. Wright and seconded by Donald MacPhedran, "That the Lily Committee would consider itself permanent and should proceed on a provincial wide basis, with the ultimate aim of becoming a lily society, registered under the benevolent societies act; and also as a regional group of "The North American Lily Society"; and it was carried on a vote.

All newly registered Patterson lilies were to be displayed at the Saskatchewan Lily Show at Kirk Hall on July 20 & 21, 1970. These would be registered in 1969 'Cardinal Beauty', 'Tiger Queen', 'Cohoe', 'Honey Queen', 'Indian Lady', 'Snowdrop', and 'Northern Splendor'. The last three lilies 'Northern Princess', 'Laura Patterson' and 'Rose Marie' were registered in 1970. It was also suggested that one of the trumpets growing in the University lily plots might be named Dr. Cecil F. Patterson, when they were finished their trials for hardiness. The University would co-sponsor the 1971 show.

The officers for the Committee for 1970 & 1971 would be Sunley as chairman, Porter as co-chairman, Maginnes as secretary. Percy H. Wright moved that we write a letter of thanks to the University for its support seconded by Albert J. Porter, and was unanimously carried.

Moments before the **April 3, 1971** meeting was opened, Dr. Stuart H. Nelson presented A.J. Porter with Awards of Merit for his lilies 'Orange Light' and 'Redland' from the Western Canadian Society for Horticulture.

The 1971 meeting opened on the subject of the need for a trophy. The search for a sponsor for a trophy was left up to Dave Robinson. Also, the fact that the Great Plains Section of the American Society for Horticultural Science was holding its annual meeting in Saskatoon from July 14 to 16, 1971 prompted the Lily Committee to capitalize on this event and hold the annual lily show to coincide with this meeting.

Dave Robinson came up with the Grand Aggregate Trophy in time for the 1971 Lily Show and Albert John (Bert) Porter was the first person to be awarded it. July 20, 1971 two Australian ladies, Mrs Catherine Biddle and Miss Dossetor of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia arrived at the Sheraton Cavalier Hotel, Saskatoon, they phoned Sunley saying that Bert Porter had given them my name as a person who would show them my garden, and those others of interest, such as the lilies

of Mossmans, Olsons and Delaheys and the University Plots that afternoon of July 20th, 1971. I was on holidays. They drove to the house. In the meantime I phoned Ed Maginnes and asked him to arrange a Lily Committee meeting for Wednesday evening, July 21st, 1971; so we could host the two ladies and their slide show of Australian lilies. They were going to Honeywood on Wednesday morning and would be bringing Bert Porter back with them for the meeting. I left it to Ed to do what he could; while I was showing them the gardens on Tuesday afternoon. When they arrived and saw the backyard literally full of Patterson, Porter, Barber, Simonet, Wright and Sunley lilies including the martagons, species and trumpets; they flew about gathering all the pollen available for freezing for their December to February summertime. They took some slide pictures of the lily patch and those of which they had taken pollen from including the ORIGINAL PINK PATTERSON (37-538-1); also pictures of the upfacing white Patterson seedling which was later named 'William White' and its light pink upfacing sibling lily. The sky did look a little threatening so we hurried over to Eugene Mossman's place.

We had just begun to look at some of his lilies when it started to shower. They cancelled the trip to Olsons, Delaheys and the University plots,, and went back to the Sheraton Cavalier to get ready for the trip to Parkside and the Honeywood Nursery. Ed and Bev Maginnes used their cool rumpus room for the slide show. Eugene Mossman brought his slide projector so we were in business for the evening. Mrs Biddle gave a good talk illustrated by many fine slides to their lilies and of the terrain and its' flora. After taking us on a pleasant journey to the Southern Continent, she accomplished, what was a complete surprise to me by presenting to Bert Porter the coveted E.H. Wilson Memorial Award. This was followed by a tasty lunch provided by Beverley. Thanks you Bev and Ed.

The E.H. Wilson Award is the highest award presented by the North American Lily Society, in honour of the plantsman Ernest Henry Wilson.

These ladies were responsible for many Patterson hybrid seedlings going to Australia including 'Brick Rose (55-48) the pod parent of 'Rose Marie'. It was a very good breeding lily, confirmed by Laura Patterson as one of Dr. Cecil Patterson's favourite breeders, and should be registered.

James Robert (Bob) Caldwell, joined our little group at the meeting on **April 8th, 1972**; bringing our membership back up to 13 again. That meeting saw the start of the by-laws for the Canadian Prairie Lily Society and the possible affiliation with The North American Lily Society. I was to enquire into this, and Ed and I were to make a draft of the by-laws as outlined by the Committee members. Art Delahey was pressed into service as the new Treasurer. He had a very soft first year of it.

The show dates were originally set for July 20 & 21, but a very early blooming season forced us to advance the show one week ahead to July 13 & 14, 1972. Ed Maginnes was in Eastern Canada on horticultural work and couldn't attend the lily show. This was when it was observed that Gene Mossman and Bert Sunley had been sitting at the enquiry tables for every show including and since the 1967 Centennial Show.

The **1973** meeting was called for Monday May 28, The Committee went over the by-laws carefully one by one. Tore them to pieces, and then put them back together again in their final form. We were then "**The Canadian Prairie Lily Society**". The founding Executive: H.E. Sunley, President; A.J. Porter Vice-President; E.A. Maginnes Secretary; A.E. Delahey Treasurer; H.E. Sunley Editor; Auditor and Directors are to be elected at the 1974 meeting.

The 1973 Lily Show was held in the auditorium of Kirk Hall, U. of S. campus. Fred Tarlton came from Edmonton on July 18th 1973, with pails full of lovely lilies and after the judging was over it became very evident that he had run away with the 1973 Lily Show. He had the Grand Champion Ribbon and the Grand Aggregate Award. We loved it as he had just proved that we were a prairie lily society serving the people of the prairies. Congratulations Fred and Helen you brought some superb stems of lilies.

September, 1973 saw Bert (Bruno) Sunley publish Newsletter No.1 as the society's first editor and the society also had its first lily bulb sale of 12 varieties listed in the newsletter with Bruno as the bulb chairman. It seemed like a great deal then, maybe it was a good deal in those days because we sold all of our bulbs. This and the new members joining the society put our new treasurer Arthur E. Delahey to work on the accounts for C.P.L.S. and thirty years later Art is doing an excellent job of our records, both financial and membership part of our existence. While

I have this gentleman in my sights, I will say that Art and William H. Silversides were the guiding lights for the 1977 N.A.L.S. Lily Show at the Education College on the U of S campus along with many helpers.

our whole being. May the 2000's turn out as good for all of us. May Jehovah bless all of you in the coming years ahead, may you have the best of lilies.

We had 34 Founding Members in the September 1973 Newsletter. There was 1 from Manitoba - Mrs. Phyllis Pierrepont; 11 from Alberta and 22 from Saskatchewan. December 1973 saw 1 member from Latvia, U.S.S.R., and 1 from Ontario; the numbers of members from Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan increased to make a total of 46 for the year 1974. We were very happy.

Miss Dorothy W. Baker volunteered to donate a Lily Album as our first Photograph Album with a number of photographs, to see it on its way. We have been adding photos ever since. Thank you Dorothy for starting us off.

I will mention a few more of our founding members whom I can remember - Daniel Dale, Fred Fellner, Lad Martinovsky, Lillian Meece, Fred Tarlton, Herbert Schwartz, Hugh Skinner, Louis Lenz, Robert Simonet, Peter Upitis. William H. Silversides moved his family and lilies to Winnipeg at a later date. Edward E. Maginnes became the Canadian Vice President for N.A.L.S. for 1977,'78 and '79. He then became the President of N.A.L.S. in 1980.

We all loved them, enjoyed them, and the lilies with



CPLS: early beginnings to the present.....

Art Delahey

On March 10, 1967 letters went forth to a large number of lily growers across Saskatchewan. Ten lily enthusiasts responded and met at the University on April 1. Thus Father M. Doll., Mrs Don McPhedran, Don McPhedran, Ed Maginnes, R.B. (Pops) McCombs, Eugene Mossman, Stu Nelson, Bert Porter, G. Smithson and Herb Sunley formed the first Saskatchewan Lily Committee. Father Doll was elected chairman, Herb Sunley co-chairman and Ed Maginnes secretary. The meeting decided that with the help of the Horticulture Dept. the committee would stage a Centennial Lily Show on July 13 and 14, 1967. That show featured 214 entries in competitive and non-competitive classes, as well as a display from Jan de Graaf of Oregon. The blaze of colour in the Kirk Hall auditorium served to give many visitors a new insight into lily culture.

We were fortunate to have Mrs Laura Patterson help with the judging of the first show. The next year when the committee decided to proceed with the naming and registration of meritorious Patterson seedlings, she gave guidance by relating some of her late husband's concerns with regards to his seedlings. As a result of Art Delahey's purchase of the lilies from the Patterson's Sutherland property, then owned by the Oblate Fathers, the opportunity arose for the Horticulture Dept. to select seedling for registrations from stock that was not entirely common to that grown at the Horticulture Dept. (Dr. Patterson did a lot of his work at home and with intentionality or through oversight that work was not incorporated into the University work). Registration resulting from committee work included 'Cardinal Beauty', 'Cohoe', 'Honey Queen', 'Indian Lady', 'Northern Splendor', 'Snowdrop' and 'Tiger Queen'. In 1970 three more varieties were registered - 'Laura Patterson', 'Northern Princess' and 'Rose Marie'.

On a warm April morning in 1973 Herb Sunley, Dr. Bert Porter, Dave Robinson (U of S Extension), Dr. Ed Maginnes (Horticulture Dept), 'Pops' McCombs and Don McFadyen (both from Prince Albert), Bob Caldwell and Art Delahey met in the Horticulture

Headerhouse to create the Canadian Prairie Lily Society (CPLS). Interest in the original shows was spreading across the prairies and more formal and extensive organization was required. Because of this leadership Herb Sunley was elected President, a position he held for many years. Bert Porter was elected Vice-President, Ed Maginnes as Secretary and Art Delahey as Treasurer. In addition to being President Herb agreed to develop the first newsletters.

The inaugural meeting approved a set of bylaws which called for the association to be named the Canadian Prairie Lily Society with the mandate of disseminating information on lily culture to the public, to hold an annual judged show and to affiliate with the North American Lily Society (NALS).

The first newsletter was published in October, 1973 and in his President's column Herb detailed much of the background organization which resulted in the creation of CPLS. As well it included the first offer of bulbs for sale- a total of 12 varieties including such long-timers as 'Bittersweet', 'Citronella', 'Enchantment' and 'Golden Chalice'. The newsletters were sporadic at first, due to no doubt to Herb's busy life and the lack of articles. In December 1973 the second newsletter outlined a suggestion from Dorothy Baker in Gravelbourg to set up a photo album to include all lilies grown on the prairies. While she started it off with donation of photos the project never really got off the ground until Dr. Milt Bell took it under his wing and today we have several albums receiving annual additions.

During the first years annual membership fees were \$3.00 (we've not kept pace with inflation!). The financial records showed a total of 34 members in 1973 with 10 prepaid through 1974. Our total receipts totalled \$268.40 and there were no expenses in 1973 (Herb probably leaned on a good friend to run off the newsletter in return for some bulbs!). Over the years our bank balance grew due to bulb sales and hosting North American Lily Society shows. These funds are

used to now provide annually, two \$1000 scholarships to students in Horticulture at the U.of S., and a \$1000 scholarship and a \$1000 bursary to horticulture students at Olds College, Olds, Alberta. the other originators who had the foresight to formalize their interest into a very viable organization, and to the many volunteers who have built those beginnings over the years.

Our affiliation with the NALS grew stronger as we hosted the 1977 show just four seasons into our existence. It was hailed as one of the best by the many American attending. Later we had very successful show in 1984 and 1998. Each show grew larger, both in stems shown and costs involved. The show generated cash flow in excess of \$50,000 and yielded CPLS a small profit for our efforts.

From humble starts come great developments and CPLS is a prime example. Credit must go to Herb Sunley and

New NALS Regional Service Medal

North American Lily Society (NALS) is presenting a new annual award - the NALS Regional Medal. Following are the requirements for the awarding of this medal.

1. The NALS has established a medal to be awarded for service to a NALS regional lily society. The decision to give or not give the award should rest with the membership of the regional society. A society should feel no pressure to make the award unless it is, in their opinion, really merited.
2. Any members of the regional society could make a nomination, supported with reasons, to that region's board of directors, executive committee, or whatever similar governing body is operative. The voting for the awardee would be ideally accomplished by secret ballot at a regular meeting of the regional society or the decision may be relegated to a smaller group such as a committee group.
3. The medal should be presented at the annual meeting of the regional society. If possible, the presenter should be an officer of NALS, preferably someone from outside the regional society.
4. As with the Slate-MacDaniels Award, this is a service award with a variable set of conditions constituting "outstanding contributions" to the society. Some contributions might include long and devoted service as a regional officer; good and friendly mentorship to new members; the encouragement of lily enthusiasts to become members of both the regional groups and of NALS; excellence of growing and showing lilies in such a way as to bring credit to the society; and similar outreach to the community at large. There are undoubtedly many other contributions that could merit consideration for the award.

Only one medal per society per year will be awarded.

Jean Erickson's Peony!

Each year I eagerly await the arrival of "Lois' Spring Gardening, the Ultimate Reference" to appear in the gardening magazine section of my favourite news stand McNally Robinson's. This year's edition once again got the gardening genes into high gear. As I paged through the magazine I came across a very familiar name - Jean Erickson and immediately thought 'lilies' not so! Reading further two other familiar names again from the lily world popped up Marv Joslin and Dan Dale, an article on lilies you say. Not so, the article was about a peony. After reading the article through I thought it would be of interest to all in CPLS. Bruce Timothy Keith, Editor-in-Chief of the magazine was contacted and he graciously gave me permission to reprint the article. Enjoy! *Margaret*

Mrs. Erickson's Peony from humble beginnings.

A Great New Variety.

Nearly a decade ago, Marv Joslin of Hollandia Flowers & Bulbs received an unusual gift- a tiny peony seedling in a coffee can. The peony belonged to Mrs. Jean Erickson of Wauchope, Saskatchewan. "I don't know if I can care for it much longer," she told Marv - After all she was 80 years old.

Marv and colleague Dan Dale had journeyed to Mrs. Erickson's to pick up some Martagon lilies she had promised them. The peony came as a bemusing surprise. "I nearly threw it away, it was so spindly," Marv admits, "but I realized that doing so would be unkind to Jean, so into the ground it went."

To Marv's surprise, the peony matured into a peony gorgeous enough to officially register with the American Peony Society in 2000. Marv named the peony 'Jean Erickson' in his friend's honour, and now this marvellous plant is hitting the retail market.

And Mrs. Erickson? She underestimated her ability to keep tending her garden. She's now in her 90's and still going strong; she's even hybridized and registered a number of new Asiatic and Martagon lilies, proving

that every generation has something to offer the world of gardening.

' JEAN ERICKSON' There are many great peony varieties, but the 'Jean Erickson' really stands out in a very competitive field. It has a number of outstanding features, chief among them is its incredibly vibrant colour, a deep red-purple. It's a long-lasting, midseason bloomer that produces many flowers, each about 15-20 cm across. As the blooms age, the stamens become silver-tipped, adding to this peony's already outstanding beauty. This plant is compact and grows to about 40 cm tall, making this a great landscaped choice. It also makes an excellent cut flower.

[**Editor:** The article "Mrs. Erickson's Peony from humble beginnings" was reprinted with permission from Lois' Spring Gardening, the Ultimate Reference 2003. The article appears in the "Pick of the Crop" section - page 64. I have one peony in the garden - a fern peony I bought a Honeywood Nursery in the late 80's or early 90's, have to check with Allan Daku on the date his memory may be better than mine! It seemed tiny at the time but boomed forth and put on a tremendous show for the Master Gardeners Conference in 1995. I have divided it since and shared divisions with family and friends. It was not thrilled being divided/moved but most of the new divisions are several years old now and are doing well. I now will be on the look out for "Jean Erickson" to grace the garden in the near future. **MED.]**

From the editor's desk.....

This is the 101st edition of the CPLS newsletter and the official 30th anniversary of CPLS (1973-2003). This newsletter will bring some of our society's history to new members and refresh the memories of long standing members. If you have a particular memory involving lilies and your associations with CPLS we would love to hear about it.

Would you like to SWAP books, bulbs, information ? Send your requests to the Editors make your newsletter work for you.

Any article submitted will be considered for publica-

tion, please include your name and a complete address. Newsletter **DEADLINES** are February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15. So get pen to paper, fingers to keyboard and send your words to :

Mail to: **CPLS NEWSLETTER EDITORS**

**Margaret/Ed Driver
182 Dore Crescent
Saskatoon, SK, Canada
S7K 4X7**

e-mail: mlily@sk.sympatico.ca

Help Wanted !!!!!

A successful society is a result of membership participation. CPLS needs its members input to remain a successful, viable society. There are specific areas in which members can volunteer their expertise and hands. Remember - many hands lighten the load.

Here are some areas in which you may be able to help CPLS in the coming year -

1. GARDENSCAPE 2003 - Gardenscape is on March 28, 29 & 30, 2003. Your help would be very much appreciated that weekend to work in the CPLS booth, the times are - **Friday, March 28** 12 noon -3:00p.m., 3:00 - 6:00p.m., 6:00-9:00p.m.; **Saturday, March 29**, 10:00a.m. 1:00p.m., 1:00-3:00p.m., 3:00-6:00p.m. & 6:00-9:00p.m.; **Sunday, March 30**, 11:00a.m.-2:00p.m. and 2:00-5:00p.m. **Contact:** Bob Caldwell at (306) 374 2873. Contact Bob by March 15 if you want a particular time slot.

2. LILY PLOT MAINTENANCE - Plot managers need help with weeding and general plot maintenance during June, July and August. For details as to how

you may help please call Stan Dunville at 343-1963.

3. LILY SHOW CO-CHAIRPERSON - if you are interested in the "inner workings" of how to stage a lily show now is your chance! Our current show chairperson would like an assistant for details on how you can help contact Barbara Adam-Eichendorf (306) 947 2830.

4. LILY PHOTOGRAPHS - CPLS has an on going Lily photography project and would appreciate help from members at large. CPLS is attempting to photograph or obtain photos of the many different lilies grown in the prairies. If you have any spare prints (4"x"6) of lilies grown in your garden the project would greatly appreciate your donation. The prints must be sharp and clearly depict the lily; it is essential that the lily is identified. Negatives are also welcome, make sure they are identified so they can be returned to you. The photos are displayed at bulb sales, shows and public events and those looking at the albums want to know the lily's name. Photos of lilies needed "ASAP" are - 'Aphrodite', 'Granny', 'Helios', 'Lady Dawn', 'Oreglow', 'Paulus Potter', 'Red Tiger', 'Scarlett' and

'Yellow Pixie'. Send your spare "snaps" to: CPLS Photos/
Carmel Dodd, 3319 Ortana St., Saskatoon, SK., S7M 3R7.

Coming events.....

MARCH 28, 29 & 30, 2003

GARDENSCAPE'2003: Saskatoon's Annual Spring Gardening Show will be held at the Trade Centre Building - Saskatoon Prairieland Exhibition, Saskatoon, SK. CPLS will be taking part in this annual event. Volunteers are needed to help with our booth. If you can help please contact: Bob Caldwell, 374-2873.

MARCH 29, 2003

MANITOBA REGIONAL LILY SOCIETY: Spring Seminar & Annual General Meeting. Canad Inn, Polo Park, 1405 St. Matthews Ave, Winnipeg, MB. The main speaker will be E.J. Soboczenski- topic Lily tissue culture. Registration - \$25.00 - includes coffee breaks, and noon feast. To register send your cheque to: MRLS c/o Marlene Puls, 99 Macalester Bay, Winnipeg, MB. R3T 2X6.

APRIL 7, 2003

CANADIAN PRAIRIE LILY SOCIETY: Annual General Meeting & Spring Fling! will be held on Monday, April 7, at the Rusty MacDonald Branch Library (in The Lawson Civic Centre) 225 Primrose Drive, Saskatoon. The meeting will begin at **7:00 p.m** sharp. The speaker will be Diann Putland of Hillcrest Harmony Flowers. Diann will be giving a presentation on flower arranging and floral art emphasis on lilies. Do not miss this it will be food for the brain and

dessert for the eyes! All members are Welcome. Bring a friend. Come and meet the gang at Rusty MacDonald Branch Library!

APRIL 26, 2003

HONEYWOOD (Dr. A.J. Porter) HERITAGE NURSERY: 3rd Annual Fundraising Education Day will be held Saturday April 26, 2003, 9:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Speakers are Terry Willoughby, Lily expert; Dick Cyper, Floral Designer; Larry Marshall, Building soil micro-organisms. Contact Judy Harley (306) 747-3522 or David Moe (306) 747-2275.

MAY 18, 2003

HONEYWOOD (Dr. A.J. Porter) HERITAGE NURSERY: Apple Blossom Time at Honeywood. Enjoy the sight and fragrance of Honeywood in bloom. Tour, craft demonstration, coffee and dessert. Contact Judy Harley (306) 747-3522 or David Moe (306) 747-2275.



CPLS President's Message.....

Having returned from New Zealand only a couple of days ago, I am already suffering from a need to see green plants and flowers again! Even though we went a little later in the season than last year, many of the flowers were still in full bloom. The dahlias were spectacular; and of course in NZ they stay in the ground year round. Most of the lilies that I saw blooming were Orientals and *L. lancifolium* was in full bloom as well. Because the NZ are the reverse of ours, February in NZ is comparable to August in Canada. I was amazed at the tea roses - some were as big as dinner plates and were as perfect as they could possibly be. There were no bug holes in them on signs of disease on the foliage. We took several hours to tour a 5 acre water garden built in a old quarry, complete with a waterfall and water lilies and lotus like I have never seen before. We had very good weather while we were there and did a lot of hiking and sightseeing.

We have two important events coming up on of Lily Society calendar. Gardenscape'03 provides us with an opportunity to make people aware of our Society as well as answer questions about lilies and raise some money sell bulbs. If you have some time to spare March 28-30, please consider helping out at our booth. Our contact person for Gardenscape'03 volunteers is Bob Caldwell at 374-2873.

The CPLS Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday April 7th at the Rusty MacDonald Branch Library at 7:00p.m.. Our speaker will be Diann

Putland, who is an expert both on lilies and on flower design. After a brief AGM, Diann will demonstrate flower arranging will lilies, particularly as it pertains to the Floral Art Section of our Lily Show. This will be a wonderful opportunity to learn from someone who has a great deal of experience with flower arranging, both commercially and for competition.

At the AGM, we will also be accepting nominations for the newly instituted NALS Regional Medal award. The details of the requirements for this medal are outlined elsewhere in the this newsletter. Nominations may be made by mail as well; please ensure that your nomination reaches the newsletter editor by APRIL 1, 2003. If you believe that one of our members is worthy of this award, please take the time to make that nomination either at the AGM or by mail.

As the snow is still on the ground, we can only dream of spring and the promise of fresh green leave and colourful flowers to follow. I hope all of you will take the time to go to Gardenscape'03 and get a gardening fix to carry you through to spring!

Barbara

Margaret's musings.....

The gardening catalogues have arrived in profusion and have been thumbed through thoroughly. My list for spring include Russell lupin seeds (already started and three inches tall growing happily under lights) and seeds of Digitalis 'Foxy' will be started soon. I have good luck with both - the lupins seem to do well for 4-5 years and D. 'Foxy' I treat as an annual. 'Foxy' has seeded itself in the garden but the season does not seem long enough to get it to bloom. I will get some lily bulbs - trumpets, aurelians, orienpets, and

longipets to plant in spring. I am still deciding on which ones to get. The choices are so numerous but there is only so much room in the garden.

Spring is on its way but you would not think so in looking out into the backyard. The snowfall in Saskatoon has been generous and the flower beds have a snow blanket at least 30-60cm (12-24 inches) thick. The air temperature at the time of writing this was about -38 C but it is sunny! The snow is a

welcome protection and will reduce the winter kill we have experienced in the recent past.

One of my favorite gardening manual/book is "*Lois' Spring GARDENING the Ultimate Reference 2003*". In this year's edition a very familiar name jumped out at me - Jean Erickson. Now when I see Jean's name I immediately think lilies, lilies and lilies, however, the flower pictured in article was NOT a lily it was a peony! This intrigued me so I immediately stopped to read it.

In short there is a new peony called 'Jean Ericksen'

Several regional societies will be holding their general annual meeting and spring seminars with any luck I hope to attend a couple. Good gardening to all!

Margaret.

Spring Care for our Lilies.....

Spring is just around the corner and before Spring "breaks out" there are some things we can do to give our lilies a good start. Much will depend on your area and what you did last fall. If your current spring care methods are working for you continue with them, if not you may wish to try something new. There is a great diversity of opinion in what one should do - do what is necessary and what works for you, otherwise you get overwhelmed and do nothing!. In reading through a number of articles this winter, a 'must do ' list started forming in my head based on items that consistently appeared in the various articles I read. Different techniques to accomplish the the "must do" jobs but the outcome should get us all to the same end - healthy, showy lilies in the coming summer. One article I came across in a North American Lily Society Quarterly Bulletin provided a bonanza of information. The article is titled "Spring Care" written by George Weiss, St. Paul Minnesota. The following are suggestions for spring activity in the lily patch are based on the article and reflect what has worked for me over the years. Here goes!

1. While snow still covers the ground take the time to relax and reflect back on last year's successes and failures. What could you do differently, if anything? Look for articles in Newsletters, Journals, magazines; talk with gardening friends; attend meetings, classes, etc. This may help solve problems and bring new ideas to your garden.

Now is the time to plan - for pest control, expanding the lily bed, hybridizing strategies, companion plants.

2. Once moderate weather arrives outside work can begin. On the Canadian Prairies the actual dates vary but

the end of April- beginning of May get us into the lily patch. If you mulch ,removing winter mulch may be the first task. "Remove or not to Remove"? Remove mulch to early and frost can damage early shoots. Remove to late - slugs may have chomped the shoots, shoots become elongated, tangled and crooked as they poke through the mulch. If the beds are small enough remove the mulch but keep it close by in case you have to protect the emerging shoots [I don't use much in the way of mulch, a layer of leaves if I have them. Instead, I plant the bulbs an inch or two deeper than recommended so they emerge a little later in spring and avoid the frost. Bert Porter shared this idea with me when I first started with lilies in the mid-70's and seems to work well for me. My back loves this suggestion!]. Once a 5-day favourable forecast occurs winter is history.

3. With the mulch gone a "cleanup" may be necessary. Remove any stems not removed the previous fall and any other plant debris that could harbour disease. Last year's summer mulch can be removed or worked into the ground. Apply only a small amount of new summer mulch so the ground can warm up easily and once into June you can finish mulch to a depth of 10 cm and maintained at this depth over the summer. Summer mulching has great benefits - a) maintains the soil at an even temperature which keeps lily bulbs and roots especially stem roots cool which lilies appreciate; b) conserves moisture; c) minimizes weed seed germination; d) keeps plants cleaner when it rains or you water and may help reduce botrytis; e) amends soil and allows water to penetrate more readily; f) provides an aesthetic touch if the right mulch is used. There are a number of mulching materials available

- hay, straw, grass clippings, composted leaves, wood chips, coco bark, composted leaves. Use what is readily available and pleasing to you eye. Wood chips and associated bacterial breakdown of the chips temporarily reduces available nitrogen; grass clippings in large amounts mat and heat up the soil and water penetrates poorly.

4. Fertilizing in spring is absolutely essential to promoting vigorous growth through the rest of the season. Two applications seems to be the norm. The first application is made just after the lilies have emerged about 12 cm(5") and the second when buds begin to grow. Granular fertilizer is commonly used. The first application you may use fertilizer with higher amounts of nitrogen **10-10-10** or **12-12-12**; too much nitrogen invites succulent growth resulting in weak stems and an open invitation to aphids which vector virus. The second application of fertilizer use one with lower levels of nitrogen such as **5-10-5**, **5-10-10** etc. If you have to use high nitrogen fertilizer for the second application use less. The amount of fertilizer depends on soil type, and soil pH you may have to experiment a bit here. The fertilizer can be broadcast most convenient for large beds or it may be "scratched in" around in plant if you have a few, here 1-2 tablespoons/plant. On heavy soils granular fertilizer should be worked into the soil. On light gritty soils watering in is usually sufficient. It is important to water immediately after fertilizer is applied so it reaches the roots and to prevent the nitrogen from volatilizing (escaping into the air). Water soluble fertilizers and foliar feeding is another means of applying fertilizer. I have used this method and had success. I have used 'Miracle-Gro' or 'Plant Product'; I use 'Miracid' for the evergreen and dogwoods so nearby lilies get a dose as well. These fertilizers have a higher than recommended nitrogen content for lilies; overly-lush growth has not been a problem for me, yet! The flowers beds also get a small dose of grass fertilizer in passing about three time through the growing period-26-13-0 in early May and June and 34-0-0 in August. A few leaves may be marked by high flying pellets otherwise the lilies seem to tolerate this regime well.

5. Water is important. In spring there is usually enough moisture in the ground to get things started but there is always the exception so be prepared. Lilies require a moist soil NOT soggy. Heavy watering can be more damaging than lack of water. If the soil moisture level in spring is poor by all means water the beds then apply water as needed remembering lilies can endure

some dryness better than overly wet conditions.

6. Weeds can be a problem and control methods need to be used early. Hand weeding, herbicides, mulching and preventing weed seed from germinating are methods that can be used to control unwanted plant growth. A combination of methods may work best depending on your situation. In our garden we use hand weeding and hoeing primarily; 'Roundup' (glyphosate) was used on invading quack grass (*Agropyron repens*) and 'No-Hoe' (chloramben) was used in areas to prevent weed seed germination. The worst weeds in our flower beds were invading quack grass (now under control) and common chickweed (*Stellaria media*). Weeding can provide a quiet time in the great outdoors!

To summarize spring care - cleanup winter debris, fertilizer, water thoroughly, control weeds early. Your early efforts should reward in summer with a profusion of blossoms. Good gardening!.

[Editor: 'Spring Lily Care' by George Weiss, St. Paul, Minnesota appeared in the *NALS, QB, Vol.43, No. 1, March, 1989.*]



Companion Plants (abridged).....

As this is my first article for the quarterly, allow me to tell you a little about myself. I was raised in northern New England and moved to Portland, Oregon in 1977. I have always been an avid gardener, so when I discovered the plant paradise that is the Pacific Northwest I knew I would never go back. It took me a while to discover lilies, because I thought all but Tiger lilies were tender tropicals that needed greenhouse conditions. I attended my first lily show in 1987 and discovered that this was not so. That was all I needed to hear, and I have grown them ever since. I joined the regional in 1988 and our bulb sales have been the major source of my impoverishment. When I am not spending all my money on lilies it goes to roses, fragrant daffodils, and many other unusual kinds of vegetable and flower seeds that I raise at home so I can have the exact varieties I want.

I also garden organically, so don't look here for any pesticide advice. I have found that mixed plantings go far in controlling common pests and diseases. I don't pretend to be an expert at anything except my own little neck of the woods, but I hope others can benefit from my experience.

I have been the victim of bad companion planting more often than I care to admit. Plants that would never be invasive in Vermont can be veritable pests where I now live due to our mild winters. I have learned how to read between the lines of the major garden catalogues, because many of them are written for gardeners in the parts of the country that actually have winter. I hope my findings will be of use to those gardeners as well as in our corner of the country.

The first thing to know is don't ever pair lilies, or any bulbs or small perennials, with something with the words "ground cover" in its description. These plants are great for covering rough, dry, or difficult areas, but if given nice rich garden soil, they will take over and show no mercy.

Here is my list of "best of the worst":

Pachysandra spp. Extremely invasive!

English ivy (*Hedera helix*). Even the variegated kinds will smother your bulbs.

Sweet woodruff (*Galium odoratum* or *Aperula odorata*). Invasive and mat-forming, Looks innocent but don't be fooled!

St. John's wort (*Hypericum*). Very invasive and smothering. Used medicinally to treat depression, but I get depressed just looking at what it can do to my garden. I inherited a patch of it and it takes no prisoners.

Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*). Invasive and a prolific self-seeder. I still can't believe nurseries charge money for this plant and its seeds. Sort of like buying dandelions. The same goes for Catnip: it is very pretty but it will spread quite rapidly, and neighbourhood felines will roll around in it until everything in the vicinity, including your precious lilies, is smashed beyond recognition. This is true even if you have a big patch of it elsewhere; they always pick the plant near your lilies with Murphy's Law precision.

Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*). I had this once in a former garden. I thought: "how sweet, buttercups, just like the cow pastures back home." The next thing I knew they were everywhere, forming tight mats and harbouring slugs.

Another group of plants to be cautious with is other bulbs, believe it or not. Here are few suggestions:

Common Star- of Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum*). This little bulb can stay under control in cold climates, but it can be a real pest in mild winter areas. It will multiply very rapidly and form dense clumps that can crowd out plants with better manners. Others in this family that are halfhardy can be safely grown as summer bulbs and stored over winter, or even left in the ground in reliably mild areas.

Tulips (*Tulipa*). I don't need to tell you that these carry virus. However, don't think that only the "Rembrandt" types are bad. Other can look okay the first year and come up all twisted and deformed the next, having

distributed their share of virus infection. The smaller species grown from seed are the safest if you can find a source.

Dahlias, canna, tropical bulbs, etc. need too much summer water to be in the same irrigation zone as your lilies.

You must also be careful with trees and shrubs. Some can harbour pests or diseases that also attack lilies. Roses that are very stiff and thorny, such as the hybrid teas, can rip tender bulb foliage to shreds on windy days if they are too close.

Now that I have said what not to do, what are some good plants to pair with lilies?

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it reflects my experience here in Oregon and I'm sure many of these plants would be welcome anywhere. I have included some plants with beneficial qualities as far as natural pest control, to make your garden more beautiful without needing to use dangerous chemicals. I have avoided discussion of extremely rare or difficult plants since many specialists will already know about them, and the point is lilies after all. Most of us have enough trouble keeping lilies in good health year after year without worrying about whether the rest of the garden will live or die.

Epimedium spp. These beautiful woodland plants never get too tall and are ideal for growing at the foot of lilies which need cool root run, such as *L. superbum* or *L. martagon*. Their arrow-shaped foliage is interesting and you get lovely flowers as well.

Thalictrum spp. Ferny foliage, a good match with woodland type species and species look-alikes, as well as Oriental. They can get quite tall, but all the leaves are at the base and they are good "veil" plants if you don't want to banish the pretty columbine-like foliage to the back of the border.

Sweet Cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*). A stately herb of the umbelliferous persuasion, with all parts of the plant smelling and tasting of sweet licorice. Loves afternoon shade just like lilies. A magnet for beneficial predatory insects such as tiny wasps and ladybugs, and you can eat it too.

Cosmos of all types. Trouble-free and attractive to birds. Use the tall pink and white ones to help support

trumpets and Orientals, and use the shorter yellow and orange Klondyke types to match the Asiatics. After the lilies fade, the bed will still have bright colour. They are surprisingly good as cut flowers.

Feverfew (*Matricaria*). This pungent herb helps to repel pests, and the double types are excellent as cut flower bouquet fillers. Try to find the tetraploid varieties, which can get much taller than the common diploids (up to three feet), and carry more attractive foliage. This plant also is attractive to beneficial insects.

Flowering Tobacco (*Nicotiana*). These are wonderful garden plants, and aristocrats among annuals. Their sweet fragrance in the evening garden is a welcome feature, and it lasts all summer. They will be perennial in milder winter areas, developing huge fleshy roots. Don't plant them too close to your lilies for this reason, or yank them out and treat as annuals. The taller types, *N. grandiflora* and *N. sylvestris*, are striking in tandem with taller Orientals and trumpets, and are shade tolerant as well, so they can be paired with woodland lilies or *Hosta*, for the coolest garden imaginable. *Nicotiana langsdorffii*, unlike the other two, is scentless but well worth growing. Cool lime-green elongated bells hang straight down and contrast with dark blue-green foliage, the riches of the group. A planting of these with white Orientals will be a refreshing sight on a sweltering August day.

Annual poppies. All kinds, yes even California poppies (*Eschscholzia*)!. These self-sow freely and can even be deemed a pest by some, but they are effortlessly removed from areas where you don't want them. They come in a wide range of colours from hottest scarlet to pale silvery pink to compliment any colour scheme. Did I mention how easy they are? Just throw seeds around and barely rake them in, and you will be richly rewarded.

Annual candytuft (*Iberis*). A flower that's almost forgotten these days, giving way to trendier annuals. Get reacquainted with these little workhorses whose gentle colours and sturdy habit go with just about everything. A great choice for bedding with shorter lilies.

Penstemon species and hybrids. Many of the species are xeric and are good with western American dryland species. What is not so generally known is the wide variety of hybrids now available that will do well in good garden soil.

Marigold (*tagetes*). The wild types of this genus can clear the ground of nematodes when used as a cover crop. The flowers are small but colourful, and the leaves are powerfully pungent. Among the cultivated varieties, the 'Signet' types are nice for their lemon scent and the flowers are edible.

Clarkia, [a genus in the evening primrose family] *Godetia* (*Clarkia amoena*) and similar annual. Very nice "ribbon candy" colours and can be direct sown for easy interplanting.

Hakonechloa macra var. *aureola*. One of the few ornamental grasses I would think of trusting around lilies, it is a slow grower, noninvasive, and has a bamboo-like appearance without the behaviour. It stays low and is a knockout with Orientals. It's expensive but good for a featured planting.

Other bulbs. Most *Allium* are great and don't attract pests. Try *Allium azureum* with pastel peach early Asiatics for a fabulous colour combination. Most minor bulbs except the aforementioned Spanish bluebells are fine.

Woody shrubs and trees. *Nandina domestica* is wonderful and even comes in dwarf forms for the smallest gardens. This "heavenly bamboo" isn't related to bamboo at all, but has the same grace and beauty. Deciduous azaleas provide a punch of early colour and are slow growers. They do not need the quantities of summer water that the evergreens do. *Spirea japonica* is a low grower that keeps a neat habit and has lovely flowers that change colour as they age.

Buddleia davidii can be used if the eventual size of the plant is taken into consideration. Some newer varieties only reach about five feet tall. The lesser known yellow ones (x *weyeriana*) are more branching in habit and can be used to support tall Aurelians in full sun; plant them on the "leaning" side. The extremely hard wood can be used as garden stakes when you need to trim it back. *Mahonia repens* is a dwarf form of the common Oregon grape and is a great companion for shorter woodland lilies. Check with a specialist for availability outside the northwest. *Pieris japonica* (Andromeda, Lily-of-the-Valley shrub) is available in dwarf forms now. It carries beautifully fragrant flowers in spring and is less heavy presence than evergreen rhododendrons make it a welcome addition.

Try these if you want to experiment:

Dianthus. For lime tolerant lilies, these could be a good choice of a companion. I can't grow them well here in my heavy acid clay but there are many varieties available for those with light soil. I envy those gardeners who can keep them, as their vanilla and clove fragrances are wonderful.

Southernwood and *Santolina*. Try these and similar plants with the same conditions as for lavender. Southernwood is available in either a lemon or orange scent and repels pest with its strong aroma.

Corsican mint (*Mentha Requienii* Benth.). The smallest of the mints and the only one you can really trust, as it is not invasive. A true rockery plant where it will survive and remain intensely fragrant. Keep away from afternoon shade and pair with dwarf species lilies.

Daylilies (*Hemerocallis*). These are great for carrying on colour and flower form after early lilies are past. However, be careful about varieties. *Hemerocallis fulva* (tawny daylily) is an aggressive spreader and very hard to remove once it forms a big clump, which it will. What you need are the really nice ones, the special ones that cost a little more. The reason they cost more is they are slower to propagate and have good garden manners. They come in a stupendous array of colours, forms and sizes. I like the semi-evergreen ones for Oregon, as they are usually repeat bloomers, and very often quite fragrant. My favourite species is the pale yellow 'Citrina', a tall graceful plant that is the source of the spider-type daylilies. It is wonderfully fragrant, especially at night, and blooms late in the season. It does not repeat, but don't let that deter you. I would also recommend 'May May', a smaller-flowered creamy yellow which repeats constantly and can take some afternoon shade while blooming its pretty little head off!

Peony (*Paeonia*). Both herbaceous and woody, or tree peonies, are among the most beautiful of garden perennials. Unfortunately they can be a source of *Botrytis* infection, so keep them away from susceptible lilies in wet climates. The taller ones make a great backdrop for permanent lily plantings, as their handsome leaves look good long after the flowers fade. Make sure they have enough support so they don't flop onto emerging lilies during rainy periods.

Roses. I love these too much to leave them out of a garden scheme. Many old-fashioned ones have a lax, graceful habit that goes well in mixed planting and there are others that are thornless or nearly so, thus making them safe for lilies. A particular favourite of mine is 'Brother Cadfael', a David Austin English rose of the most

delicious pale silvery pink. The flowers are huge and very fragrant, the stems are essentially thornless, and its upright habit makes it a nice cut flower as well. There are so many out there, just find a book or catalog that goes beyond the ubiquitous hybrid teas and you're on your way. Not that I don't love hybrid teas, but many of the just don't meet the mixed border criteria of graceful form and rude good health.

Vinca minor. This is about the only plant called ground cover that could be considered safe, as it is very low growing. the white and violet types are less vigorous than the more common blue-purple type. There is now a variegated one on the market if you want to go bankrupt buying it. It is supposed to behave itself; we'll see about that. Beware of the "giant" form out there as it is twice the size of the normal form and it is too much for a bulb bed.

A few more things to think about:

Be aware of the eventual height and spread of anything you put near your lilies. If you figure you can just move it later, think again. Make sure watering requirements are similar, as many lilies do not tolerate excessive summer watering. Don't plant pest magnets plants too close. You don't want to invite them all to the same place. Remember that "flowers attract, leaves repel": strongly aromatic foliage can help deter certain pests that like to chew on plants without such a defense when planted together.

If you have bulb beds which you constantly replant and change, you won't want permanent companion plants. Consider the benefits of an attractive mulch which keeps the soil splash off your plants in the rain and reduces watering needs.

I recommend the following books:

Christopher, Tom, and Michael A. Ruggiero, *Annual with Style*. Connecticut: Taunton Press, 2000. (Up to date and thorough treatment. Lots of good suggestions for combining plants.)

McDonald, Elvin, *The 100 Best Annuals - a Practical Encyclopedia*. New York: Random House, 1995. (Good for rediscovering old favourites, an excellent antidote to the dread disease known as "annual snobbery".)

Sheldon, Elisabeth, *The Flamboyant Garden*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1997. (Great photos and how-to for using hot colours, with a generous dose of humour.)

Winterrowd, Wayne, *Annuals for Connoisseurs*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1992. (A frank assessment of plants both familiar and new.)

[**Editor:** The above article titled **Companion Plants for Lilies, and Other Thoughts** was written by Donna J. Hathaway, President, Pacific Northwest Lily Society was reprinted from The North American Lily Society Quarterly Bulletin, Vol.55, No.1, March 1, 2001 **MED**]

Wayne Lindsay

CPLS has made a donation to the Honeywood (A.J. Porter) Heritage Nursery, Parkside Saskatchewan, in memory of the passing of Wayne Lindsay, Saskatoon, SK. Wayne was a long standing and appreciated member of the Canadian Prairie Lily Society.