

# Minnesota Nurserymen's newsletter

Prepared by  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Institute of Agriculture  
• Agricultural Extension Service  
• Horticulture Department

In Cooperation with  
• Minnesota Nurserymen's Association  
• Minnesota State Horticultural Society



Vol. 14, No. 1 and 2

September and October 1967

## THE MIDWEST NURSERYMEN'S SEMINAR

Vincent K. Bailey

The fifth Midwest Nurserymen's Seminar was held at Shenandoah, Iowa, August 10-12. This event is becoming one of the important functions that Minnesota nurserymen look forward to each year. The weatherman cooperated 100 percent, and we enjoyed moderate temperatures and full sunshine. Overall arrangements for handling the group were provided by the companies of the area, and they must be commended for the fine job.

Shenandoah probably has more plant production than any other part of the United States, with the exception of one or two areas in the West. There are two major wholesale producers and growers as well as two very large mail order firms. Several other nurseries producing large quantities of nursery stock also are within a few miles.

There were 430 participants from 25 states and Canada. Thursday evening's get-together was presided over by Don Moffett, who is sales manager of Mount Arbor Nurseries. He introduced a number of folks, including Ted Korves, Plumfield Nurseries, Inc., Fremont, Nebraska, and President of the American Association of Nurserymen; Harold Crawford, Willis Nursery Company, Ottawa, Kansas, Director of Region 4; Robert F. Lederer, Executive Vice President of the American Association of Nurserymen; Wayne Dickson, Director of Public Relations of the American Association of Nurserymen; John Pinney, writer affiliated with the Willis Nursery Company, Ottawa, Kansas; Ed May, President of Earl May Seed Company, Shenandoah, Iowa; Jack Foster, President of Henry Field Seed and Nursery Company of Shenandoah, Iowa; Homer Greenwood, Mount Arbor Nurseries; Floyd Hartman, Mount Arbor Nurseries; and George Welch, President of Mount Arbor Nurseries.

Bob Paulis of Shenandoah Nurseries, who is President of the Iowa Nurserymen's Association, was the emcee for the Friday evening buffet and introduced Everett Asjes III, President of the Missouri State Nurserymen's Association; Glen Hyde, President of the Nebraska Associa-

tion; Harold S. Crawford, new American Association of Nurserymen board member, Region IV; Robert F. Lederer; Wayne Dickson; Wayne Ferris, President of the Mail Order Association; and Lloyd Platte, President of the National Landscape Nurserymen's Association.

There were many acres of very fine plant material. Other items of interest included the propagation and handling of stock throughout the packing and shipping process. I was very much impressed with the improved quality of much of the plant material in this area. Certainly producers and merchandisers are becoming increasingly aware of this most important phase of the nursery industry and are beginning to recognize the need for additional attention to quality.

We were all curious about how better stands are obtained and how their quality is improved. After visiting with owners and personnel, two major factors were apparent: (1) increased care is being paid to selection of personnel at the supervisory level and, in some cases, to selection of laborers. Equipment and buildings have been improved. These improvements have resulted because of increased labor costs. The improved buildings are as modern as those in any U. S. nursery center.

Mount Arbor Nurseries have about 2,400 acres of growing fields; 790 acres are under irrigation. Their propagation capacity is 2,000,000 potted liners and 3,500,000 rooted cuttings. We saw the use of chemical weed control in both major producing firms.

The Shenandoah Nurseries are not quite as large. However, they are rapidly improving their plant material quality as well as the stands obtained. Many in the group were impressed with these conspicuous improvements.

We visited May's Test and Display Garden, which is located on a 20-acre tract of land near a major highway. The May Company supplies 39 stores with nursery products. Trees, shrubs, conifers, annuals, and perennials are on display here. Also, the All-American Trials for roses are held here.

Many of us were surprised to see the extensive growing fields of the Henry Field Seed

and Nursery Company. Their grounds looked very fine. They are getting good growth and are fast improving the quality of their merchandise.

The exhibits were rather scattered, making it a little difficult to view them effectively. However, there were many machines of importance and of interest to all of us, including modern digging equipment, a machine that fills pots and puts the plants in them, planters, front-end loaders, sprayers, and cultivators.

The get-together was officially terminated with a Saturday noon luncheon, though a number of visitors remained to view some of the fields again.

Though I wasn't able to obtain an accurate count of the number of Minnesotans at the meetings, I know we were well represented. Minnesota nurserymen, I know, must have come away with many good ideas which they can incorporate into their own operations in the future.

#### NEW RESEARCH GRANT

The Fred C. Gloeckner Foundation, established by the Gloeckner Corporation of New York, has granted \$3,500 for a graduate fellowship in the University's Department of Horticultural Science. This grant will finance research in postharvest physiology of cut flowers.

The new fellowship will be a valuable extension of floricultural research and is most appreciated by the Department of Horticultural Science and by the University.

#### ARBORETUM NOTES - - -

##### MAGNOLIAS IN MINNESOTA

Mervin C. Eisel

Many people are amazed to see magnolias in bloom in Minnesota. Even after last winter's recorded  $-40^{\circ}$  F., several magnolias provided a show of abundant bloom this spring.

Some magnolias are reasonably dependable for Minnesota. A discussion of growing requirements follows.

Since winter hardiness is the greatest limiting factor, site selection is of utmost importance. Wind protection from the north and west is recommended. Areas with poor air drainage should be avoided since some magnolias have flowers that open before the last spring frosts. Some flowers may withstand slight frost; others will brown. In the arboretum, magnolias are planted on a slope that faces southeast and is protected from the north and west by native deciduous hardwoods.

Magnolias prefer a rich, moist soil high in organic matter. They cannot tolerate either the lack or overabundance of moisture. They do best on slightly acid soils and poorly on soils over pH 6.5.

Magnolias should be transplanted in early spring. Digging may continue from the time the ground can be worked until petal-fall. Plants should not be stored over winter. Transplanting should be done with a ball of soil, and care must be taken to minimize digging injury. Magnolia roots are fleshy and extremely susceptible to decay when injured. Such damage often is responsible for the death of newly planted magnolias.

Magnolia acuminata (Cucumber Magnolia). Although this magnolia is considered to be the hardiest, it is not in our collection at the present time. Two small plants were planted last year. They were in extremely poor condition and did not live. (The plants were dug bare root and stored over winter before they were received.)

There are several plants in the Twin Cities area that exhibit complete hardiness. These trees are 40-50 feet high. In the southern states, cucumber magnolia can attain a height of 80-90 feet. The spring foliage is bright yellow-green turning to a bright green during the summer. Flowers appear after the leaves have opened, so the blossoms are not considered showy.

M. kobus borealis (Kobus Magnolia). This Japanese native was planted in 1962. It sometimes has twig injuries during severe winters.

M. x loebneri 'Merrill' (Merrill Magnolia). This is a hybrid of M. stellata x M. kobus selected at the Arnold Arboretum. The double white flowers are 3-4 inches in diameter. Blooming period sometimes lasts for 2 weeks. Merrill Magnolia has come through without winter injury, except for occasional flower bud kill.

M. salicifolia (Anise Magnolia). This plant has displayed tip-kill following a severe winter. This year there was no injury, and one plant had 19 blooms. The large blooms are very fragrant. The plant is dense and compact and is especially attractive. Although no reference in our library indicates magnolias to be subject to fireblight, this plant has all the symptoms of this disease. Only one plant has been affected, and this year is the first year the symptoms have occurred.

M. x soulangeana (Saucer Magnolia). This is a hybrid of M. denudata x M. liliflora. The plant has been extremely variable in hardiness. It may range from complete flower hardiness to bud-kill or even severe dieback. Injury often is delayed, causing branches to die during the growing season. The 3-inch white flowers are flushed with purple.

M. stellata (Star Magnolia). This Japanese native usually is considered to be a shrub, since it commonly grows only to 4-10 feet tall. It is often broader than it is tall. Star Magnolia is the first to bloom in the spring. The 4-inch pure white, semi-double flowers are fragrant, and the numerous petals have an elongated shape.

M. stellata 'Waterlily' (Waterlily Star Magnolia). This magnolia has been very dependable. Seldom are the flower buds injured. Bloom usually commences in early May and lasts for 10 days to 2 weeks. Flowers are similar to the Star Magnolia.

M. tripetala (Umbrella Magnolia). This tree, native to the southern states, has displayed a surprising degree of hardiness. It comes through winter without injury. The largest plant has bloomed during the past 2 years. It has very large, creamy-white flowers. They appear in the center of the terminal whorls of leaves and are partly hidden, so they are not especially showy. The leaves of young plants are often 18 inches long and a foot across. New growth was almost insignificant for the first few years after planting. Since growth started, however, the umbrella magnolia has grown 30 inches a year for the last 4 or 5 years.

#### COMMERCIAL FLOWER GROWERS' SHORT COURSE

September 19, 1967

Speakers from Minnesota, Michigan, and California will discuss various aspects and problems of commercial flower growing at the Commercial Flower Growers' Short Course to be held Tuesday, September 19, at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul. Registration for the 1-day course begins at 8:15 a. m.

Nurserymen interested in further information may write to the Department of Agricultural Short Courses, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.

#### NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

Leonard B. Hertz joined the staff of the Department of Horticultural Science on July 1. He is responsible for extension work with fruits.

Hertz came to the University from the Niagara Chemical Division of the FMC Corporation, where he worked with disease and weed problems of fruits and vegetables. Prior to that position, he was on the staff of Kansas State University. He holds B. S., M. S., and Ph. D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin.

Mr. and Mrs. Hertz and their four children, Linda, Richard, Jeffrey, and Kenneth, will be living in St. Paul and look forward to making new friends in Minnesota.

Harold F. Wilkins has been a member of the Department of Horticultural Science since August 1, 1966. His responsibilities include extension work with retail florists and commercial flower growers, teaching floral design and flower shop management, and research in floriculture.

Wilkins holds B. S., M. S., and Ph. D. degrees from the University of Illinois. He interrupted his studies for 2 years in the U. S. Army, and he held a 1-year appointment to teach courses in flower arrangement and flower shop management at Cornell University. His most recent experience before coming to Minnesota was in physiology research for the USDA in Bradenton, Florida.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS

Dwarf Conifers. H. J. Welch. London, Faber. 1966. May be ordered from American Nurseryman, 343 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. 60604. \$13.50. 334 pages, 300 illus. Written by a nurseryman specializing in dwarf conifers.

Hostas in Minnesota Gardens. Horticulture Fact Sheet 16. Mervin C. Eisel. Explains the planting, culture, and propagation of hostas. Includes a descriptive listing of common hostas. 2 pages. Single copy free; in quantity, 2¢.

Culture of Garden Roses. Horticulture Fact Sheet 17. Mervin C. Eisel. Tells how to select, plant, prune, and care for roses. 2 pages. Single copy free; in quantity, 2¢.

(Reprinted) Controlling Insect Pests of Trees and Shrubs. Entomology Fact Sheet 28. T. M. Peters. Single copy free; in quantity, 2¢.

For copies of the above fact sheets, write to:  
Bulletin Room  
Institute of Agriculture  
University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

#### IN THIS ISSUE

THE MIDWEST NURSERYMEN'S SEMINAR  
NEW RESEARCH GRANT  
ARBORETUM NOTES  
COMMERCIAL FLOWER GROWERS' SHORT COURSE  
NEW FACULTY MEMBERS  
NEW PUBLICATIONS

Mervin C. Eisel  
Jane P. McKinnon  
Co-editors