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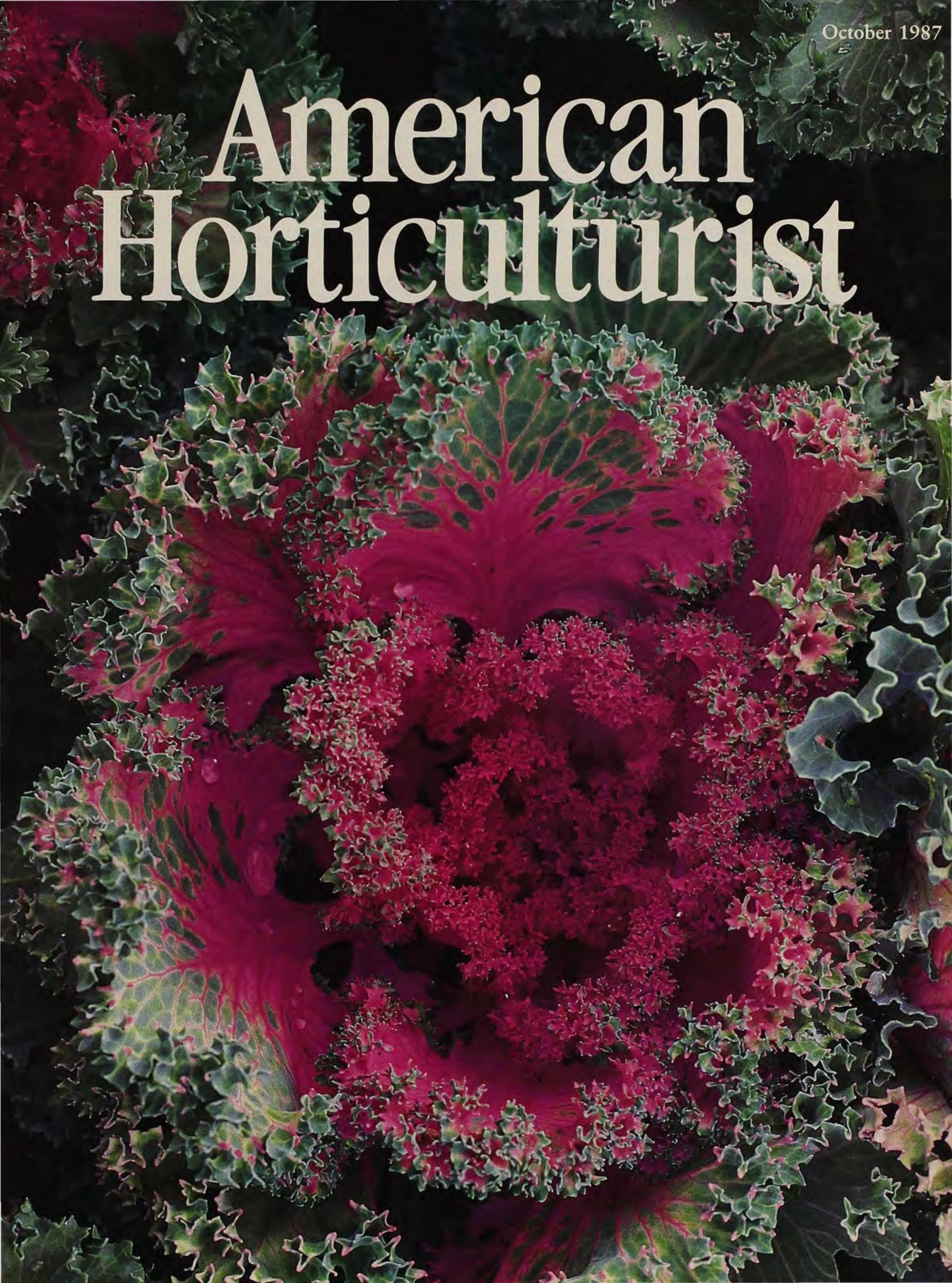

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VOLUME 66 NUMBER 10

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Achillea 'The Pearl' is just one of many "everlasting" perennials featuring long-lasting flowers that can be dried and easily preserved. To learn more about these versatile plants, turn to "Everlasting Perennials" on page 10. Photograph by JoAnn Schowalter Loebel.

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On the Cover: The brightly colored leaves of *Brassica oleracea*, commonly called flowering kale or ornamental cabbage, add a distinctive touch to the autumn garden. This colorful plant also makes an unusual centerpiece for the table. For more on color in the garden during the fall season, see "An Autumn Garden" on page 21. Photograph by Joanne Pavia.

Erratum: The flower pictured on page 10 of the August issue was incorrectly identified as *Belamcanda chinensis*; however, it is actually *Iris dichotoma*. Even though these two plants are members of *Iridaceae*, *B. chinensis* has deep orange flowers with red dots. The society deeply regrets this error.

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Meet Our New Directors

I am delighted to report to the membership that we have found a new Executive Director who is actively working right this minute at River Farm. He is Pieter F. Oechsle, former President of F.A.O. Schwarz, Inc., the world-renowned retail toy chain headquartered in New York City.

Mr. Oechsle comes to the Society with a strong background in retail and mail-order management. Before his tenure with Schwarz, he was Director and General Manager of Oechsle CIA Commercial S.A., a wholesale distributor of small tools, giftware, textiles, and toys in Lima, Peru. Along with the wholesale business, he operated three retail stores in the greater Lima area, under the name of Tiendas Oechsle. Mr. Oechsle was involved in overseeing imports, visiting American and European trade fairs, and developing exclusive representations of specific merchandise lines. He was also responsible for setting up a small toy manufacturing plant, Juguetes y Envases Nacionales S.A. in Lima, Peru.

Mr. Oechsle holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree, with an emphasis in marketing and economics, from McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

We also have a new Director of Publications and Communications—Virginia Warner Louisell. Mrs. Louisell was formerly Director of Information Services at the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) in Washington, D.C. While at NAFSA, she was responsible for editing and producing all publications for the 5,300-member organization, including a newsletter and softcover books. She has also served as Director of Publications and Public Relations at two academic institutions, including Mary Baldwin College, where she was involved in writing a public relations procedures manual that was published as a national model for small colleges. As Director of Alumnae Activities at Mary Baldwin College, she was involved in managing the annual alumnae fund and other projects, as well as in designing direct mail appeals.

Mrs. Louisell received her bachelor's degree from Mary Baldwin College and has completed postgraduate work in advertising, journalism, accounting, and public speaking.

Pieter Oechsle, Virginia Louisell, the entire staff at River Farm, and your Board of Directors are forging a team to serve your horticultural needs and interests better.

In my first letter I asked two favors: first, to write and share your ideas and goals for AHS, and second, to share the joys of horticulture by giving a friend a new membership in the Society. Alice and Richard Angino of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, have already brought in 12 new members! Mr. Angino, a member of the Board of Directors, actively serves as Chairman of the Membership Committee and also works on the Finance and Education Committees. Both are members of the President's Council and regularly attend all of the AHS functions. Bravo, Anginos!

I was thrilled with each and every helpful idea—especially that of Mrs. George Gardner, who suggested better ways to handle book orders, and a gentleman from Texas who asked to have our seeds distributed earlier, as the present schedule is too late for southern gardeners. We have already implemented a more efficient book ordering procedure and have scheduled the seed catalogue to be printed earlier.

While I mentioned the Anginos' outstanding response, your entire Board is diligently working to make AHS a vehicle for all our members to work toward a common goal—excellence in horticulture and a more beautiful America. So brighten your friend's day with a new membership in the American Horticultural Society, and keep your suggestions coming!

—Carolyn Marsh Lindsay
President

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Hardy Geraniums

Hardy geraniums are addictive. Not only are these annuals, biennials, and perennials obliging and untemperamental, but like so many of the best garden plants, they are also largely free of disease and persecution by insects.

Unlike pelargoniums, those gorgeous big red- and pink-blossomed things that are commonly called geraniums, hardy geraniums, or cranesbills, are comparatively modest, small-flowered plants. One hardy geranium with which almost everyone is familiar is *Geranium maculatum*, our native woods geranium, which has deeply cut leaves and pale lavender blossoms. The pretty weed called herb Robert (*G. robertianum*) is another species of the same genus. There are wild geraniums in other parts of the world, however, that put on a better show than do ours. It is these perennials and their special hybrids that are described here.

Hardy geraniums offer something for everyone. There are small ones, those of medium height, and taller ones (none is taller than three feet). Their attractive foliage varies in size, design, color, and texture, and is sometimes aromatic. In many of the species, the foliage turns red in autumn. The flowers are small but usually copious enough to make a distinctive contribution to the garden. The colors range from white, pale pink, lavender, and blue to a fierce magenta.

Many cranesbills tolerate dry, shady conditions and are especially useful to gardeners who have such a problem site to deal with. Almost all of them will tolerate partial shade, and some even welcome it. They are attractive when planted in large numbers at the base of shrubs or when used in underplanting shrub roses. Some bloom in early spring, but most have a

ABOVE: *Geranium sanguineum* var. *striatum*. RIGHT: *Geranium endressii*.

Photographs by Pamela Harper

peak blossom period in June. (A few of them will perform again if cut back.) Several especially generous individuals bloom all season long.

Cranesbills get their name from the seed-carrying part of the plant, which is shaped like the bill of a crane. (*Geranos* means crane in Greek.) This part consists of a little five-sectioned chamber, the rostrum, from which emerges a long, thin central column whose exterior is covered by five separate strips, or awns, that act as springs. When the seed is ripe, the rostrum starts to separate into sections called mericarps. The awns suddenly peel away from the bottom, curling upwards; each awn then takes its mericarp with it, shooting the seed into the air. (If you intend to harvest the dry seed, you must act quickly before the plant disperses it; otherwise, you will be left with only the empty crane's bills.)

Hardy geraniums are propagated by seed in the spring or by stem cuttings in summer. They are also propagated by division, or, in the case of some species, by root cuttings.

Division is easy with most hardy geraniums and is best done either in spring or right after the plants finish flowering in July. (The ones that never finish flowering must be divided in spring.) According to some experts, if you want new plants, you can burrow down under with your fingers and break off pieces from the mother plant. I've never tried this method; my soil is probably too solid for such a neat operation, but it might work well in sandy loam, especially with *G. sanguineum* and all its cultivars, which produce many fleshy roots.

Two of the most popular hardy geraniums on the market today are cultivars of *G. cinereum*—'Ballerina' and *G. cinereum* var. *subcaulescens* 'Splendens'. The first bears a four-inch mound of gray-green, five-parted, lobed leaves. The petals of the open-cup, smoky-pink flowers are notched on the edges and have purplish-red veins. This is definitely a rock garden plant and should be planted up high, in a suitably gritty soil or, at the very least, in sandy, well-drained loam on level ground. I lost several of them from the front of the border during long, rainy periods. The species *G. cinereum*, which comes from the Pyrenees, is a rosette plant with grayish leaves, white- or pink-veined flowers, and long, trailing stems. It looks especially attractive cascading over a wall. *G. cinereum* var. *subcaulescens*, from Turkey, is also good for cascading over walls, and offers dazzling color in the garden. The flowers are deep purplish-red, or magenta, with a black area in the center. *G. cinereum* var. *subcaulescens* 'Splendens' is a non-trailing rosette and a charming, ferocious little thing whose blossoms are hot pink. It, too, should be grown in a rock garden, perhaps surrounded by gray-foliaged plants and small blue campanulas. It should *not* be planted in soggy clay.

Another good plant for a raised bed or wall garden is *G. dalmaticum*. This six-inch-tall native of Yugoslavia bears tiny tufted clumps of small glossy, lobed, fan-shaped leaves. The flowers are a pure pale pink, without even a hint of magenta. In regions where moderate temperatures prevail in the summertime, it should be grown

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in full sun; in those areas where summers are hot, it should be grown in moist soil and in partial shade.

The 1½-inch-tall *G. endressii* is available at most nurseries. The most readily available cultivar is 'Wargrave Pink', although my favorite is 'A.T. Johnson'. They both grow 15 to 18 inches high and have deeply lobed, five-parted leaves like those of a buttercup. Both flower all summer; 'Wargrave Pink' bears candy-pink blooms, while the flowers of 'A.T. Johnson' are a silvery salmon-pink. They have one habit that some gardeners find annoying: after their initial burst of bloom in spring, they send masses of new blossoming stems out from under the central tuft of foliage; as a result, they take up about one foot more all the way around than is usually allotted to them. Their neighbors either fight back or sink quietly out of sight. In August, you may ask yourself, "Whatever happened to those blue salvias?" When you lift up the skirts of 'Wargrave' or 'A.T. Johnson', you'll know. If you were to cut the plant to the ground after the first flowering, it probably wouldn't have to resort to such rude tactics in order to keep blooming, and would simply send up a new, nicely restrained flowering clump. Some people plant these cranesbills near tolerant shrubs into which they can climb.

G. endressii was crossed with *G. versicolor* to make *G.* × *oxonianum* 'Claridge Druce', a vigorous plant that grows quite tall for a cranesbill—2½ to three feet. The foliage is somewhat hairy and slightly glossy. The flowers are funnel-shaped and rosy-pink, with a strong network of dark veins; the color fades to white at the base. This plant has two outstanding virtues: it likes shade, and it will reproduce the parent plant.

A superior plant with *G. endressii* as a parent is *G.* × *riversleaianum* 'Russell Prichard'. Although it is said to be marginally hardy (the lovely, but tender *G. traversii* is its other parent), I've kept it cheerful in my border for three or four years. Since I've read that it likes a dry, sunny spot, I plan to put a piece of it on a rock wall. Its ebullience is unquenchable; bright pink flowers are borne all summer and fall. (Because the flowers' color has magenta in it and is brighter than that of either parent, this cultivar has been wrongly assumed to have *G. sanguineum* forebears.) I cover it tenderly in winter and lift off the pine boughs with much trepidation every spring. It should be divided and replanted every few years.

In another case of mistaken genealogy, the 15- to 18-inch *Geranium* × 'Johnson's Blue' is often mistakenly associated with *G. endressii*. Actually, it is a cross between *G. himalayense* and *G. pratense*. This well-known sterile hybrid, like so many of the taller geraniums, forms a wonderful hemisphere of deeply divided leaves until it blooms, when the perfect filigreed half-globe is destroyed. The violet-blue flowers are almost 1½ inches across, with translucent veins and pinkish tones, especially toward the base. If you plant a swath of 'Johnson's Blue' in front of a mass of 'Helen Elizabeth' Oriental poppies, I can promise you an exhilarating aesthetic experience.

G. himalayense is also sold under the names *G. grandiflorum* and *G. meeboldii*. It, too, is 15 to 18 inches tall and produces the largest and the most intensely blue flowers of any cranesbill. (They are still *violet*-blue, but Graham Thomas says they are "like butterflies, beautifully veined.") The blooms appear from June to August. After the plants have finished blooming, they can be cut to the ground; they will quickly make fresh new foliage but will not bloom again.

Geranium × 'Magnificum' has been called "the king of the cranesbills." It has always been my favorite blue, so I am glad to see it lauded. It is often labeled as *G. ibericum* or *G. platypetalum*, although it is a sterile hybrid of the last two plants. It is two feet tall, and has sticky-hairy flower stalks and handsome, deeply cut, hairy, rounded leaves that usually turn red in the fall. The large blue, red-veined flowers are, I think, even prettier than those of 'Johnson's Blue'. All of these taller geraniums need frequent division, since they spread quickly.

G. pratense, the handsome European and Asian meadow cranesbill, is the tallest of them all. Its flowers are blue, too, but they are a gray- or lavender-blue. The plant is really too much of an oaf for the border, at least for mine, for it flops open as it flowers. (If only it would retain its elegant dome shape!) It also seeds itself with what someone calls "feckless fecundity." All in all, this species is a good candidate for the wild garden, where it can naturalize itself and spread out to its heart's content. I have *G. pratense* 'Plenum Violaceum', which, although bulky, doesn't seed itself and has charming, double, red-violet blossoms. Also available is 'Plenum Album', as well as 'Mrs. Kendall Clark', which some say is

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blue, others say pearl-gray flushed with rose.

Thanks to British seed exchanges, I have raised a few specimens of *G. wallichianum* and *G. wallichianum* 'Buxton's Variety' (sometimes called 'Buxton's Blue'), which I also hover over, fearing they will die some cold winter night. (They are from the Himalayas but are undoubtedly not used to capricious and violent weather changes, sometimes without the protection of snow.) These low mound plants, with interesting marbled leaves, send out endless trailing stems. These stems produce little one-inch flowers with scalloped petals that are quite delicious in cool weather. The outer edges are iridescent blue, shading to crimson towards the center, where there is a circle of pale cool white. The whole petal is traced with faint wine-red veins. A cluster of dark wine-colored stamens whose anthers are navy-blue completes this little masterpiece. The underside is a rosy-lavender veined with dark red. 'Buxton's Variety' should be grown on a wall or in a well-drained spot in the front of the border, near a friendly neighbor whose foliage will be complementary and who won't object to being laced with the wandering stems of the cranesbill. Gray santolinas, small white shrub potentillas, or perhaps *Nepeta* 'Dropmore' are compatible. *Geranium wallichianum* has a deep taproot, so it is difficult to move once it is established. Since this species doesn't easily divide, the usual method of propagation is by seed.

My garden includes a few more seed-exchange geraniums that haven't yet bloomed, including *G. psilostemon*, a tall, vibrant, magenta-flowering subject, and *G. pylzowianum*, an alpine from China that will not survive in my area, according to *Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia*. Lincoln Foster's description is so enticing that I'm hoping Wyman exaggerates. Foster says *G. pylzowianum* creeps and bears lovely, flat, clear-pink blossoms on thin, wiry stems one to two inches above the foliage. It requires full sun. I have only one specimen of *G. renardii*, and it doesn't look quite satisfied. Its foliage and mounded, compact structure make it worth growing; the grayish leaves are circular, puckered, and deeply lobed. The flowers are described as "brief"; on my plant, they are also sparse. This species grows best in a rock garden and hates heavy soil.

I've been trying to keep *G. macrorrhizum* 'Ingwersen's Variety' from spreading all over its part of the border. I've learned that it can be used more effectively as a ground cover under dry, shady conditions. The pale pink flowers on this 10-inch plant are not dazzling, but the divided, rounded, light green leaves are aromatic as well as pretty. I'd like to get 'Album', whose white flowers have red calyxes, and 'Bevan's Variety', in crimson-purple.

One species that is offered in this country in quantity is *G. sanguineum*. Although it is called "bloody cranesbill" in England, its bright magenta flowers are far from reminding one of blood. The species, usually 1½ to two inches high, is a kind of dense, twiggy, aggressive-spreading shrub with starry leaves. The five-petaled flowers are flaming red, purple, or magenta. There are a couple of very good dwarf forms of this cranesbill sold by a rock garden nursery, as well as 'Shepherd's Warning', recently arrived from England at another nursery. Also available is 'Album', which I love, despite its colonizing impulses. It bears delicate pure-white blossoms. The one most people prefer is *G. sanguineum* var. *striatum*, which is found either in mound or prostrate form. It has pointed, divided leaves and pale apple-blossom-pink flowers that are veined red. This classy variety bears a mass of flowers in spring, then a few off and on all summer.

Other cranesbills worth investigating are *G. sylvaticum* 'Mayflower', the tiny brown-foliaged *G. sessiliforum* 'Nigricans', and the pink-flowered *G. orientalitibeticum*, which has marbled leaves and underground round tubers strung together on ever-advancing roots that look like strings of prayer beads.

Unfortunately, hardy geraniums are a good example of fine garden plants that are not always easily obtainable. Although these plants have been gracing European gardens for decades, gardeners in this country are now able to buy only a handful of the many different species and cultivars. The only way to speed up the process, aside from nagging the nursery people, is to join the American Rock Garden Society, the Royal Horticultural Society, the Alpine Garden Society (in England), or the Scottish Rock Garden Club, and take advantage of their seed exchanges. In the meantime, let us cherish those hardy geraniums we do have or can grow ourselves from seed.

—*Elisabeth Sheldon*

Elisabeth Sheldon manages a small perennial nursery in Lansing, New York. A former painter and teacher, she currently writes and lectures on horticultural topics.

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The problem with standard screw-in bulbs is that they use one source of light and therefore, are deficient in a portion of the spectrum. For example, most bulbs labeled "plant lights" are really incandescent lights which are strong only in the yellow–red (560-650 nm) area of the spectrum and have a sprayed on blue coating inside the glass. This coating actually cuts down the brightness or intensity of the light and only improves the spectrum to a minimal degree. It is true that some fluorescent tubes do have a balanced spectrum but they require a means of putting the tubes right over the plant as they are not completely effective at distances greater than 2½–3 feet. This makes them inefficient for large plants. Besides many fluorescent fixtures are decoratively unsuitable.

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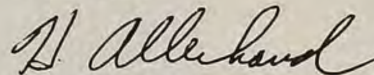

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Everlasting Perennials

Gardeners tend to think of "everlastings" as annuals, but in fact there are many hardy perennials that offer the same qualities as the annuals—that is, long-lasting blooms that can be dried and easily preserved.

I have grown "everlasting" perennials for many years. Not only do they provide me with excellent material for crafts and flower arrangements, they also add a special beauty to my borders.

Our smallish (one-third-acre) suburban lot is positioned perfectly to catch the afternoon sun. However, because the trees and hedges surrounding our property have grown so quickly, casting shadows over the property, we decided to re-design the garden. Since the trees shaded existing perennial borders, which were situated around the edges of the yard, and tree roots competed with the perennials for space, we decided to add new borders that could take advantage of the sun in the center of the yard. The new borders—two L-shaped raised beds—are now almost entirely within reach of the sun's rays from early morning until dusk.

With so much new border space to fill, naturally I lifted and divided many of my favorite perennials from the old borders. Anything troublesome or demanding of time and space was left behind. Daisies, phlox, and chrysanthemums from the old borders form the framework of the new garden; their robust foliage and generous display of flowers provide interest throughout the changing seasons. The front of the raised beds are edged with candytuft (*Iberis*), veronicas, coralbells (*Heuchera*), dwarf bellflowers (*Campanula*), and pinks (*Dianthus*). These low-growing treasures have multiplied and bloomed profusely in their new environment.

The biggest surprise of all, however, has been the "everlasting" perennials I used to fill in the borders. Thanks to full sun and improved soil, these have turned out to be much more of an attraction in the new borders than they had been in the old ones. Although they had much to offer under semi-shady conditions, their generosity in the new borders is boundless.

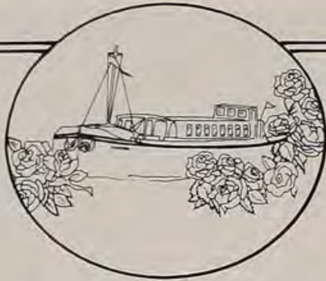
Among the "everlasting" perennials moved to the new sunny borders is tall *Achillea* 'Coronation Gold', commonly called yarrow. In the old border, it needed to be staked as it leaned into the sun. In its current spot in the sun, it requires staking, this time because of the number and size of its blooms. It also grew much larger than I expected, so I tried dividing it in late spring in its second year. I have since divided it in the fall as well, and have also grown a successful stand of plants from seed.

Achillea thrives in hot weather, survives drought, and offers attractive ferny foliage. The flat-headed, golden blossoms of this three- to four-foot-tall plant can be used as dried flowers. As the strong-stemmed blooms develop in early summer, they should be cut and hung upside-down to dry. (Be sure to cut them before any hint of brown appears.) I wind a "twist-tie" or pipe cleaner around three to six stems and hang them upside-down in a warm, dry, dark place for about two weeks. When the large heads stand firmly above the stems, they are ready to use. New flowers develop from the side shoots throughout the growing season.

Also in the new borders is the less-familiar *Achillea ptarmica* 'The Pearl', which offers clouds of little, pure white, puffy balls that look like branches of pearls. My plants grow to about two feet. The 18-inch tomato stakes placed around them, which I entwine with string, are quickly hidden by the fine, narrow leaves. In July, sprays of blossoms cover the plant. Best of all, the

FAR LEFT: The puffy flowers of *Achillea* 'The Pearl' stay white even after they are picked. ABOVE: *Sedum spectabile* looks attractive when combined with dusty-miller and chrysanthemums. LEFT: The silky foliage of *Artemisia* 'Silver Mound' retains its texture when dried.

Photographs by JoAnn Schowalter Loebel



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FLOWERS FOR DRYING

flowers stay white when picked, and new flowers develop throughout the summer. Strip all foliage from the branches and hang them to dry. I prefer to order vegetatively propagated plants (those plants produced by division or from cuttings) of this cultivar rather than seeds; not all specimens I have seen are as impressive as the jewel I have in my garden, and I suspect some seed-started plants are to blame. Although an occasional catalogue calls this treasure a "spreader," I have grown it for 15 years, divided it many times, and never had to worry about it encroaching on its neighbors.

Gypsophila, or baby's-breath, was another obvious choice for the sunny borders. My plants now produce wispy clouds of white flowers in early summer. One of the most successful groupings in the new garden has been a collection of white perennials: the early *Phlox* cultivar 'Miss Lingard', baby's-breath, 'Miss Muffet' daisies, a white astilbe, *Achillea* 'The Pearl', and *Phlox* 'Everest'. The white puffs of *Achillea* 'The Pearl' and baby's-breath fill in the spaces between daisies and phlox. Then, as the phlox starts to fill out, it is time to cut back the baby's-breath, and 'The Pearl' continues to hold its own. My astilbe has been known to re-bloom at the same time, which gives the baby's-breath time to recover.

Gypsophila can flop a bit if not staked early. Use a peony ring, and be sure to provide each plant with ample space (at least three feet) for it to spread its delicate branches. Enjoy the armfuls of bloom in the garden as long as you dare. Then cut the branches before the flowers brown, strip the foliage, and allow to dry in piles or in baskets. (You can also hang them, if you wish.) After harvest, fertilize the plant and water well. (*Gypsophila* loves lime and lots of water, though it needs good drainage.) Then wait for a second spurt of bloom.

I have grown *Gypsophila* from seed and was pleased with the results until I saw what vegetatively propagated specimens of *G. paniculata* 'Bristol Fairy' looked like. Then I tried *G. paniculata* 'Perfecta', and found it to be even more vigorous and attractive. There are fewer flowers on these improved cultivars, but they are much larger and more impressive as dried flowers than the blossoms of the seed-grown plants. It is worth investing in a good specimen to be sure of the quality of the hybrid. *Gypsophila* is difficult to move and divide because of its deep taproot. However, it can also be propagated by tip cuttings.

Another plant that has thrived in the new garden is *Astilbe*. If this plant were grown strictly for its foliage, it would be worth having, but the white, pink, or rosy sprays also add a beautiful feathery accent to the borders. The sprays turn to beige as they dry, but hold their form quite nicely. The glossy, deep green leaves, which are lacy in texture, provide long-lasting interest and, if placed in front of baby's-breath or Oriental poppies, will fill in the spaces. This hardy and totally trouble-free plant can be divided in spring or fall.

Astilbe is always found on lists of plants for shade. However, I find it also has much to offer in the sun. Although the clumps I have left behind in the old borders are growing satisfactorily, the plants that have been moved to the sunny borders are even more successful.

Both the dwarf and the taller types of *Liatris* add spiky accents to the garden. The upright feathers of purple appear at different times during the summer. When the color has faded, the strong spikes provide interest in the borders, and the grassy tufts of foliage remain attractive throughout the growing season. Like the flowers of astilbe, these spikes do not retain their color, but do retain their shape. Many a clever flower arranger has been known to spray them after drying, to add color to a winter bouquet.

Two thistle-like perennials that need the full sun my new garden offers are *Echinops*, commonly called globe thistle, and *Eryngium*, or sea holly. *Echinops* 'Taplow Blue' grows to about three feet and has strong stems and coarse foliage. I always admire the perfection of this flower, with its spiked, round globes of blue, which appear in midsummer and continue to bloom into fall. The plants need staking to keep them upright. For interesting dried bouquets, pick the flowers at various stages (small, medium, and full-blown), but be sure to cut them and hang them to dry while they are still blue; the color will remain blue and the globe will retain its shape and not lose its spikes only if the flowers are picked early enough. I like to leave some of the foliage on the stems because the white underside adds interest as the leaves curl.

Eryngium is a smaller plant, with smaller and more oblong-shaped globes, but the stems and flowers retain their metallic-blue color. This sun-loving perennial grows to about 18 inches and does well in poor or

sandy soil. The teasel-like, pineapple-shaped heads are marvelous for drying.

Yet another small blue perennial with "everlasting" blooms is *Catananche*. Commonly called Cupid's-dart, it bears cornflower-blue, zinnia-like blooms atop 18-inch stems. The flowers, borne in early summer, are one inch across and have black centers. The blossoms close to form a silvery bird's nest, with edges of blue peeking out the top. If picked before they close, they will remain blue. The silvery nests are also attractive. Each clump produces a dozen or more stems, but Cupid's-darts look best planted in masses.

I grow these attractive perennials from seed every few years, since they are not long-lived. Frequent division in spring seems to prolong their life; good drainage also helps. To dry, secure six to eight stems with a "twist-tie" and hang. The stems are spindly, but they toughen as they age.

I did not include *Baptisia* in the new borders, since it is doing quite well in the old garden. A vigorous, handsome plant, *Baptisia* is not bothered by pests or diseases, but it has a deep taproot and does not like to be moved. It offers sweet, pea-like, blue flowers in spring and good foliage all summer. The long, black seedpods that follow the flowers on the sturdy stalks are very ornamental and can be harvested as you wish.

There was no need to move my sedums from the old border either, because they do well no matter where you put them. Although there are hundreds of sedums from which to choose, cultivars of *Sedum sieboldii* and *S. spectabile* are best for my purposes. I prefer 'Autumn Joy' and 'Meteor' for the deeper color their blooms offer. These succulent plants are low-growing most of the summer, but in July and early August, they suddenly put up sturdy 12- to 18-inch stems with flat-headed green blossoms. The green slowly turns a tantalizing pink or rose. As fall arrives, the colors fade to beige, or rust and brown. The tones of the dried blossoms are unbelievably rich, and the dried flower stalks are very long-lasting. They survive the heaviest snows if left unpicked, but are also excellent for winter bouquets.

A perennial that is not as widely grown as it deserves to be is three-foot-tall willow amsonia. I divided the plant from the shady borders and almost did not recognize it in its sunny location. It bears lovely, pale blue blossoms in late spring that are followed by long, tendril-like, multi-fingered seedpods. The plant remains quite handsome in the border throughout the growing season. If the foliage is picked for drying, the leaves remain on the stems and curl just a bit.

Lavender is another plant that offers both dried flowers and dried foliage. *Lavandula angustifolia* subsp. *angustifolia*, which grows to three feet, and its 1½-foot-tall cultivar 'Munstead Dwarf' are both good garden plants. The violet spikes appear in July and August. Both flowers and foliage are used in dried flower arrangements and aromatic products. Lavender requires full sun.

Members of the allium family also offer good dried specimens. Onion blossoms are small, fluffy, lavender balls that dry best when hung. The purple flowers of the tall, May-blooming *Allium aflatunense* last for weeks in the garden, and the seedpods that follow have an interesting spoke-type form. I prefer these pods to those of the June-blooming *A. giganteum*, which must be picked before the color fades to preserve the globe for drying. They all do well in my old semi-shady border. Only *A. giganteum*, which needs to be protected in the Midwest from late frosts, requires special attention. The tiny buds begin to poke up from between the wide leaves in early spring and will be blackened by frost if not protected. I cover my plants with a bushel basket at night until stable temperatures prevail.

Last, but not least, is my favorite foliage perennial, *Artemisia* 'Silver Mound'. This low-growing rock garden plant has the silkiest foliage imaginable and rounds out to about 12 inches. When it becomes a bit floppy in midsummer, it is time to trim it back. To dry, hang the trimmings in bunches. The stems become stiff, but the fluffy foliage retains its texture. (I use the foliage to cover straw wreaths or as a filler in baskets of "everlastings.") Divide the plants very carefully in spring.

The decision to provide the right spot for many of these sun-loving plants was indeed the right one for us. Full sun makes a tremendous difference, especially for these "everlasting" perennials, which allow gardeners the opportunity to savor the beauty of their blossoms year-round.

—JoAnn Schowalter Loebel

JoAnn Loebel is a garden writer and lecturer living in Northbrook, Illinois. She is co-author of a book on drying flowers, *Flowers Are For Keeping*, and has written for *The Mother Earth News* and *Garden Design*.

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HOR

The John J. Tyler Arboretum

TEXT BY MARCIA BONTA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRUCE BONTA

An arboretum is often a balm for weary urban souls who come in search of peace and tranquility among the tall trees and quiet trails. This is certainly true, at least, of the John J. Tyler Arboretum near Media, Pennsylvania. A wilderness oasis in the suburbs of Philadelphia, it is justly famous for its large variety of woody plants, both native and exotic. It is equally valued for the 20 miles of trails that meander through the 700-acre terrain, which ranges from deep woods to open fields.

The Arboretum is the legacy of Minshall and Jacob Painter, two Quaker brothers who planted nearly 1,000 species and varieties of shrubs and trees on their inherited family estate from 1849 until 1876. Both were interested in botany and meteorology, and they co-edited a variety of pamphlets on such esoteric subjects as a phonetic alphabet and a numerical system based on 16 rather than 10.

Minshall was the older and more scientifically inclined of the two and, like most 19th-century self-taught naturalists, dabbled in many scientific projects. His meticulous meteorological records were submitted to the Smithsonian Institution, and his many inventions included a fire alarm device that utilized a detonating mixture. One of four founders of the Delaware County Institute of Science, he collected minerals and insects as well as plants.

Jacob, who was 13 years younger than Minshall, was interested in literature and wrote poetry. However, like Minshall, he also collected plants, and the brothers worked together to collect plant specimens for their estate. When a plant was introduced into cultivation, they would obtain a specimen from one of their botanist-friends or from a nearby commercial nursery to add to their collection.

When Minshall and Jacob died in the 1870's, within three years of each other, the estate was left to a nephew, John J. Tyler. (Tyler's mother was the Painter brothers' sister Anne.) It was Tyler who

LEFT: Magnolia blossoms at the Arboretum. RIGHT: A giant sequoia *(Sequoiadendron giganteum)*.

extended the property from 300 to 700 acres and who, together with his wife Laura, created an endowment to administer the estate as an arboretum after their death. In 1945, it became a public arboretum.

Today, 19 of the original trees planted by the Painter brothers still stand on the property. Most of these trees serve as the focal point of the Old Arboretum and are featured along meandering trails in the valley below the manor house, Lachford Hall, which was built in 1738. The most notable Painter specimen is a giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) that was planted just before the War Between the States. It is the only Painter tree that is not located in the Old Arboretum but rather along Painter Road. Its isolated location may explain why a trespasser was able to cut the top off to use as a Christmas tree back in 1895 without being detected. It is now 80 feet high, has a circumference of 11 feet, and—because of the trespasser's deed—has a double trunk in its upper portion.

Another remarkable specimen planted by the Painters is an Oriental spruce (*Picea orientalis*) that is now over 100 feet tall. Native to mountainous areas in Asia Minor, Caucasus, and Armenia, this slow-growing tree is resistant to disease and insects, and thrives in sheltered niches as far north as southern Canada. It offers narrow purple cones and an attractive pyramidal shape, and it is still one of the best spruce trees to plant if you want a large conifer in your garden.

Another prize Painter tree at the Tyler Arboretum is a specimen of the venerable cedar-of-Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*), a native of Syria. Because of its broad shape, it needs ample room to grow, and therefore does best on property with large acreage. In contrast, the lovely Yulan magnolia (*Magnolia heptapeta*), another Painter tree, is small, with fragrant white or creamy flowers. It has been cultivated in small Chinese gardens for at least 1,300 years and can still be found growing in the moist, wild woodlands of central China.

Except for the enormous white poplar (*Populus alba*) from central Europe and Asia, the 125-year-old Sawara false cypress (*Chamaecyparis pisifera*) of Japan, and the ancient Chinese ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), the remaining Painter trees are all native to the eastern United States. These include the yellow buckeye (*Aesculus octandra*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), Canada hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), and American sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), which is attractive as a park or lawn tree.

ABOVE: Hybrid maple trees in the Pinetum area. RIGHT: The Glenn Dale azalea 'Dayspring'.

Two small, but lovely gardens at the Arboretum are the Bird Habitat Garden and the Fragrant Garden, built for visitors with sight impairments. The Bird Habitat Garden has been planted with aesthetically pleasing shrubs and small trees that provide songbirds with food, shelter, and a place to rest. Some of the species that offer food for birds are the red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*), common winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), shadbush (*Amelanchier canadensis*), Washington hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*), longstalk holly (*Ilex pedunculosa*), and common trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*). Many of these small plants also provide shelter and resting areas for the birds. An old quarry stone is used as a birdbath in the summer, while a bird feeder is kept filled in the winter. At any time of the year, visitors can sit on a wooden bench and watch or listen to the birds in this quiet nook on the west side of the old barn.

Directly above the Bird Habitat Garden is the Fragrant Garden, which is filled with both the pungent and sweet smells of culinary herbs, herbaceous plants, and flowering shrubs. Planted on two terraced levels and bordered by stones, this garden is tended for two hours every Wednesday morning by members of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Herb Society of America. (Visitors with questions about the cultivation of herbs are encouraged to come at that time.) The Fragrant Garden is at its best in midsummer, when the tansy, lovage, spearmint, lavender, thyme, bayberry, and other herbs are thriving.

Visitors will find that there are plant collections in flower at the Arboretum most of the year. In late February, for example, the hillside below Lachford Hall is covered with white snowdrops (*Galanthus elwesii*) and yellow winter aconites. These are followed by the large blooms of naturalized plantings of spring bulbs. Early Asiatic magnolia blossoms in shades of pink and purple are quickly succeeded by the pink and white flowers of cherry trees in the fields, as well as the showy blossoms of the Arboretum's large crab apple tree collection.

Early May is lilac time at the Tyler Arboretum. On a breezy spring day, visitors can detect the odor of 80 lilac bushes long before they reach the grassy lane that leads through this old specimen planting of purple, pink, and white cultivars, most of which are no longer available to the home gardener.

Just as the lilacs begin to fade, the rhododendron and azalea collections come into full bloom on Rhododendron Hillside and the North Woods. For almost two months, there is a continual succession of blossoming native azaleas and the very late-flowering Swarthmore rhododendron hybrids. The latter hybrids were developed by Dr. John C. Wister, who was once the head of the Botany Department at nearby Swarthmore College and used the Tyler Arboretum for his rhododendron experiments. Today, visitors wander along woodland trails to see such beauties as *Rhododendron* × 'Elie Shammarello', the Glenn Dale azalea 'Dayspring', and *Rhododendron* 'Fantasy', strikingly set in a grove predominated by tulip trees. This same area

also contains the Holly Collection, which includes many older American holly cultivars, as well as exotic hollies from all over the world.

As part of its mission to educate gardeners about the landscape value of native plants, the Tyler Arboretum has recently added the Golden Walk with its own self-guided tour. An informative brochure describes the salient features of the shrubs, trees, and wildflowers, all of which are labeled. The fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), sweet bay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), arrowwood viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*), and swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*) all have showy white blossoms in spring. The spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) has yellow flowers in early spring and yellow leaves and bright red, spicy-tasting berries in the fall. The American elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), sour gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), and American holly (*Ilex opaca*) are just a few of the native shrubs and trees bearing fruit that is attractive to birds.

It is easy to find a wide variety of wildflowers growing beside the miles of trails at the Arboretum. There are trout lilies or adder's-tongue (*Erythronium americanum*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), wood lilies (*Lilium philadelphicum*), Indian-pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*), may-apples (*Podophyllum peltatum*), and skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), to name just a few. Most of these, along with many other species, have also been planted along a wildflower loop just off the Golden Walk. Here, the visitor can always find at least a few labeled plants in bloom, from the cut-leaved toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*) and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) in late April, to the zigzag goldenrod (*Solidago flexicaulis*) and closed gentian (*Gentiana andrewsii*) in late September.

Perhaps the crown jewel of the Arboretum's wildflower collection is moss pink (*Phlox subulata*), which grows on a rare remnant of a serpentine barren called Pink Hill. In the eastern United States, serpentine barrens occur only in isolated sections of Chester, Delaware, and Lancaster counties in Pennsylvania and sections of Cecil County in Maryland, although other examples can be found in Cuba, Japan, Norway, and Italy. (The green mineral "serpentine" takes its name from a green-and-brown snake that lives on serpentine outcrops in northern Italy.) Because serpentine contains toxic amounts of magnesium, nickel, and chromium (which are toxic), as well as inadequate amounts of calcium, potassium, and phosphorus (which most plants require to grow), the plants that have adapted to the presence of the mineral are both more sparse than and different from those of the surrounding habitats. The few familiar plants growing on the barrens, such as dry land snakeroot (*Eupatorium aromaticum*), usually have a dwarfed form. Many visitors to the Tyler Arboretum in late April take the Pink Hill Trail not only to see the showy moss pink on the open barrens but to enjoy the rest of the wooded trail as well.

ABOVE: The Visitors' Center, with cedar-of-Lebanon *(Cedrus libani)* in the foreground. RIGHT: The fragrant lilac trees are a popular attraction at the Arboretum in early May.

Still another interesting area to explore is the Pinetum, a field of over 25 acres featuring a large conifer collection of pines, spruces, hemlocks, firs, cedars, false cypresses, junipers, and larches. In addition, this open field environment provides a superb habitat for bluebirds. One of the first bluebird box projects in Pennsylvania was begun here, and 45 to 50 pairs of bluebirds now live year-round in the Pinetum area.

Many visitors spend quiet hours wandering over the 200 acres of the Arboretum's cultivated grounds. Wooden benches are tucked in just the right places so that one can stop to rest and appreciate the fine blend of wild nature and cultivated plants that the Tyler Arboretum has achieved.

Other visitors pick up a trail map at the John C. Wister Education Center and spend the day hiking on the various trails that run throughout the Arboretum. The 10-mile-long Wilderness Trail encircles the entire property and occasionally follows the meanderings of both Dismal and Rocky runs. There are also shorter trails, such as the Dogwood Trail, which leads through several acres of native flowering dogwood trees, and the Rocky Run Trail, which features some of the most mature woods at the Tyler Arboretum.

Donald Wyman defines an arboretum as a place that "may be used for public enjoyment and recreation" but "is established specifically for the education of the public." Certainly the John J. Tyler Arboretum, with its wide variety of educational programs throughout the year on both horticultural and nature-related subjects, fits Wyman's criteria. But the Arboretum also describes itself as "a place for growing and exhibiting plants and for the quiet study and enjoyment of the natural life." Such gentle, worthwhile pursuits are reminiscent of the horticultural-naturalist brothers who began the enterprise so many years ago.

Marcia Bonta, a weekly columnist for the *Altoona Mirror*, has written for *The Conservationist*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Pennsylvania Heritage*. Her most recent article in *American Horticulturist*, "Bowman's Hill State Wildflower Preserve," appeared in the April 1987 issue.

An AUTUMN GARDEN

BY PETER LOEWER

Autumn in the Catskill Mountains is usually over just after Halloween. Until then, most of the flame-colored leaves manage to cling to the trees. In local gardens, a few staunch marigolds continue to bloom, while bedding mums dot driveway borders with brilliant tones of red and orange. Then, in early November, the cold fall rains come; wind-whipped drops fly across dark gray skies, pelting the trees, and soon only the beeches, the oaks, the now-yellowing larches, and an occasional peach have any foliage at all. Shortly after Election Day, night temperatures go down to 20° F. By Thanksgiving, sleet storms may alternate with light snow.

It is now early November in the Catskills. One night out of three, temperatures in the garden fall to 26° F, and it's 10 o'clock in the morning before the frost on the north side of the roof melts and turns to wisps of steam under a still, warm sun. Only when the stars are hidden by clouds brought up from the South by spiraling high-pressure systems will the garden awake the next morning without any ice in the birdbath or a few frozen drops at the tip of the outdoor water faucet.

There's a cool breeze rustling the leaves of the ornamental grasses in the perennial border as I pass on the way to the cutting garden to see what still offers color. A flock of red-winged blackbirds flies overhead (the geese have long gone) on its way to Jamaica Bay and then south.

Brassica oleracea, flowering kale or ornamental cabbage.

A number of plants still have their autumn dress. Japanese iris are swords of yellow-brown, and a few hostas display yellow leaves, though most are now beginning to break apart. Many of the smaller ornamental grasses have put forth new leaves in answer to the cold. But generally, those plants that were specifically chosen to provide color or flowers from spring through fall give the best show.

In the cutting garden, a number of the annual California tidy-tips (*Layia platyglossa*) are still in bloom; their white-edged yellow petals seem impervious to the cold. Seeds are scattered on the spot two or three times a year to ensure continual bloom.

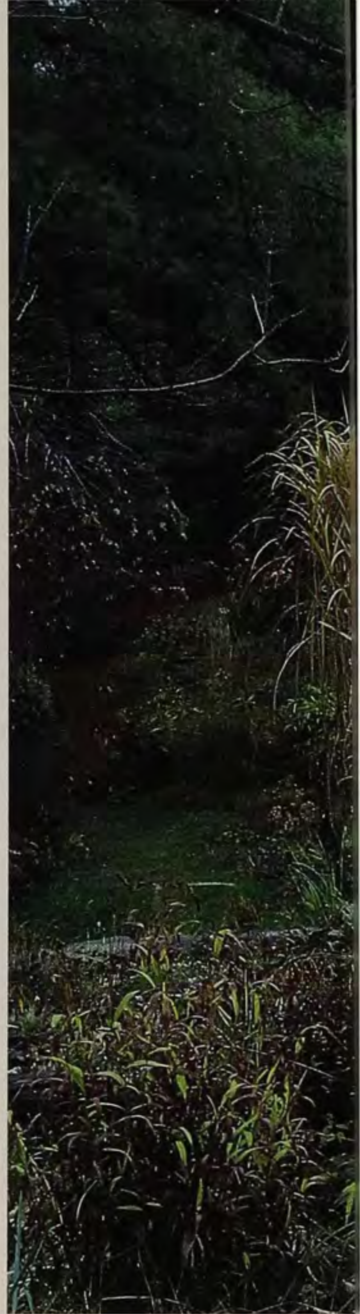
Arching five feet over the heads of the tidy-tips are the branches of milkweed or butterfly flower (*Asclepias fruticosa*), a perennial from Africa that is treated as a warm-season annual by most seed catalogues. A fine ornamental, this rangy plant is usually grown for the strange pods that follow the blossoms. Bronzy-green in color, the pods are covered with soft spines and often grow to 1½ inches in diameter. White bunches of small, rather unusual flowers that hang in groups of five or six are shriveled by the middle of October, but the plants and pods persist. We started them indoors last March to give them a big jump on the season.

There are three cardoons (*Cynara cardunculus*), which were started indoors in early April. Their thistle-like blossoms appear on four-foot stems that stand high above beautiful, deeply cut, arched leaves of dull silver. This plant is a perennial in

the warmer areas of the world and is said to survive USDA Zone 7 winters. In our mountain cold, cardoon is treated as an annual, though it is a spectacular one that will persist well into November.

Just to the right of the cardoons are the three-foot-high stems of the Australian native, winged everlasting (*Ammobium alatum*). The common name is in homage to the strange green ridges that run up and down the stiff, winged stems. In fact, the plants resemble tall, green "twist-'ems" (the kind used to tie up plastic bags), each topped with small, white everlasting flowers with yellow centers. This is another plant that one would think would shrivel up at the first sign of frost, yet the only hint of the cold is the diminished size of the flowers; what was once three inches wide is now only a scant inch. The seeds were started indoors last spring, and the seedlings were transplanted on the first of June; the plants began to bloom in July.

Finally, a whole row of ornamental cabbages (*Brassica oleracea*) stretches across the front edge of the vegetable garden. In my area, the plants are true biennials and are grown only for their foliage; flowers only appear the second year and are immediately killed by the frost. Leaves are either deeply cut or slightly lobed. The center leaves of the plant are predominantly pink, white, red, or purple, depending on the cultivar. Seed is sown either indoors six weeks before the last spring frost, or directly in the garden in late spring. As the nights begin to get colder, the leaves of ornamental cabbage become brighter with color; the colder the nights, the brighter



BELOW AND RIGHT: Ornamental grasses highlight the author's garden in autumn.

Photographs by Peter Loewer

the tints. (For a most unusual centerpiece for an autumn table, the stalks can be cut, the larger and rangier leaves at the bottom removed, and the cabbage placed in a vase of water, where the plant will continue to grow.)

All the perennials that brighten the autumn garden were chosen because they meet three requirements: they are hardy in an area where once every three or four years the temperature plummets to -25° F; they require little care; and they are at their best when the days shorten, in September and October. Rather than bunching these particular plants together in one spot, we have scattered them throughout the garden.

To the left of the vegetable garden, I've started a grove of staghorn sumacs (*Rhus typhina*), patterned after those growing in the Wild Garden of Wave Hill in the Bronx, New York. My first sumac was a chance seedling from the woods at the top of the hill; after five years, it is now a sizable tree. By selectively cutting the shoots produced during the spring and summer, I can carefully plan the direction of the grove.

Americans often denigrate the sumac because it grows in poor soil and is common throughout the Northeast. But the English have long recognized the sumac's value; the Royal Horticultural Society gave it its Award of Garden Merit in 1969. I, too, find it to be a valuable tree. All summer long, the tropical-looking branches give welcome shade, while in the fall, the tree is a blaze of orange. Now, toward the end of autumn, the leaves have all but fallen, yet the stems are still topped with the dark red clusters of fruit at the branch tips.

On the bank that rises above the perennial border, we've planted the rock cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*) so that its branches will cascade down the slope. Attractive all through the year, this creep-

There's a cool breeze rustling the leaves of the ornamental grasses in the perennial border . . . A flock of red-winged blackbirds flies overhead . . .

RIGHT: *Asclepias fruticosa*, commonly called milkweed or butterfly flower. FAR RIGHT: *Lamium* 'Beacon Silver'.

ing bush is especially distinctive in the fall, when the red berries sparkle among the glossy, green leaves. The flowers in June are small and pink and easily missed, but the berries are truly beautiful and persist throughout the winter. A young plant will grow only inches off the ground but will eventually develop a herringbone pattern of layered branches with shiny, deep green leaves.

In various places around the garden, we've set out autumn crocuses. The glorious mauve-tinted double flowers appear in stark contrast to the brown crumpled leaves blown about by the winds. The loveliest is *Colchicum* 'Waterlily', which was planted on September 15th and began to bloom in mid-October. The soil must be well drained, and since the six-inch leaves do not appear until the following spring, the corms must be placed carefully.

On top of the bank, winged euonymus (*Euonymus alata*) stands guard against the fields that follow up the hill. The leaves are sparse and bright scarlet against the blue sky. On closer inspection, one can see bright orange berries standing out against the strange cork-winged stems of this six-foot-tall shrub. Winged euonymus is another garden denizen that entertains the whole year, with fresh green stems in spring and summer; bright red leaves and berries in the fall; and finally, unusual branches and twigs that give a fine texture to the winter garden. Soil demands are simple, and full sun is preferred.

Along the back wall of the garage, I put in a two-foot-high raised bed, surrounded by a wall of stone rather than of wood. The bed is filled with soil laced with white pine needles, sand, and gravel that was left over after the driveway was scraped and topped with new gravel. The bed faces southwest and sits in the direct sun in the summer. There I planted a clump of *Stachys byzantina* (lamb's-tongue or lamb's-ears, depending on your point of view). The plants now cover an area of four square feet and form an eight-inch-high mass of soft, felty, gray leaves. At this time of year, the mass of leaves is topped with many dead, but still-attractive 30-inch stems that carried small purple flowers throughout July and August. What a happy sight to see these woolly leaves, warm-looking even under a layer of frost!

Just behind the lamb's-ears are three boltonias (*Boltonia asteroides*), from a genus of asters named after an English botanist, James Bolton. Often called the thousand-flowered aster, boltonia will grow under most conditions, though it requires adequate sun. The flowering stems of my plants are three to four feet tall and literally covered with starry blossoms. They have been brightening up this corner of the garden throughout most of October. 'Snowbank' is the attractive cultivar offered by most nurseries in the United States. Boltonias are especially beautiful in a wild garden.

Peter Loewer

Below and along the edge of the raised bed where the stones face north and branches of a neighboring weeping birch provide some summer shade, I have planted a line of *Lamium maculatum* 'Beacon Silver'. Only the edges of the leaves are green; the rest of the surface is a soft silver that glistens in the shade, a fit background for the little pink, snapdragon-like flowers that bloom during the summer. At this time of year, the leaves are still bright and silvery, and will remain so well into November.

Amur silver grass (*Miscanthus sacchariflorus*) can grow to a height of 12 feet in a good season. In our climate, it usually matures at around 10 feet, and is topped with waving, feathery plumes—first purple, then silver, and finally white. Throughout the summer, this clump of bamboo-type stems and gracefully arched leaves is a focal point in the border, but the full beauty of this grass shines during the fall, when the flowers dry in the afternoon sun. After mid-October, the green leaves slowly change to light tan, and closer to the ground, the stems darken to red. The blossoms and most of the leaves will last into early spring. Full sun and average soil are the only requirements for healthy growth.

Next to the Amur silver grass is my favorite ornamental grass, variegated purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea* 'Variegata'). This is truly a plant for all seasons: a fountain of fresh, green-and-white-striped leaves in spring; blossoms in summer on three-foot-high panicles that are striped like the leaves but also tinged with violet and green highlights; and then in the fall, a fireworks display of colors, best described as yellow-bronze, that persists well into winter, until the icy winds rip most of the foliage apart. Unlike most grasses, purple moor will tolerate partial shade. Since its ancestors are native to the moors of Scotland, it prefers an acid soil and even tolerates some dampness.

As I walk back to the kitchen for a late-morning cup of coffee, I pass the area across from the garage, a spot that is shaded all year by a 60-foot white pine that towers overhead. Around the trunk is a planting of myrtle (*Vinca minor*) that has been slowly spreading for 15 years. Summer or winter, it's a carpet of shiny green, dotted here and there with lavender flowers every spring. This morning I see three dots of color; the myrtle is blooming again, fooled by the mild afternoons into thinking it is already spring.

Peter Loewer is a botanical artist and scientific illustrator who writes and illustrates his own books. His most recent article in *American Horticulturist*, "A Catalogue Review: Tree & Shrub Suppliers," appeared in the February 1987 issue.

Restoration of a Poet's Garden

Born in 1882, Harlem Renaissance poet Anne Spencer spent many hours during her lifetime tending her Lynchburg, Virginia garden, the source of inspiration for most of her poems. When she died in 1975, she left behind not only her poetry, but also her special garden, which has been carefully restored and is now open by appointment.

BY JANE BABER WHITE

Four years ago, on the advice of a friend, I went to see the remnants of a little garden in the heart of Lynchburg, Virginia. My life has not been the same since then.

The garden I saw was that of Anne Spencer, a Harlem Renaissance poet of international renown whose poems have been published in the United States as well as South America and Europe. Born in 1882, Anne was educated at the Virginia Seminary in Lynchburg and worked as a high-school librarian for 24 years. Her husband, Edward, was Lynchburg's first parcel postman. The Spencers' home served as an intellectual oasis for notable black scholars and entertainers, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., James Weldon Johnson, George Washington Carver, and Marian Anderson.

Anne frequently worked on her poetry into the late evening hours in her garden cottage, "Edankraal," a charming one-room sanctuary built for her by her husband. Edward constructed the chimney, floor, and terrace using slabs of greenstone given to him by his friends at a local quarry. The stained glass used for the front window and the Gothic arches used to make trumpet-vine supports on the sides of the front porch were also gifts from friends and neighbors.

Anne created a traditional cottage garden to complement Edankraal. Although she had no formal training in landscape design and few opportunities to observe the construction of a garden firsthand, she seemed to have a talent for designing gardens. She decided to divide the long (45-by-125-foot) space behind the house into "rooms" by using an arbor and a pergola. This design proved to be not only attractive but also effective in directing the flow of traffic through the garden.

Edward added his own clever touches to the garden, including a lattice fence at the entrance, which he built with wood from the original back porch of the main house. He also constructed three large purple martin houses, which towered above the garden.

Friends often traveled from afar to see the garden at its peak of bloom. One frequent visitor, W. E. B. Du Bois, presented the Spencers with "Prince Ebo," a cast-iron African head, which they imbedded in the concrete edge of their pond and was used to spout water.

An amateur horticulturist, Anne kept abreast of the latest plant introductions and sometimes traveled long distances to purchase new cultivars. Her love for plants was so strong, in fact, that almost every poem she wrote derived from the garden in some way. For example, *Nasturtium* was a favorite subject. Other features of nature, such as blades of grass, the sky, or earthworms, also figured prominently in her poetry.

Anne Spencer died in 1975 at the age of 93, after tending her garden for more than 70 years. In 1976, the Spencers' house, along with the garden, was declared a Virginia Historic Landmark and placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

When I went to see the garden, it was in shambles. A peony was poking its head out from under the smothering weight of honeysuckle vines, the little English boxwood was broken, and the cast-iron head no longer spouted water. Yet I could tell, just from the feeling of the place, that Anne Spencer had loved the garden.

Anne's son, Chauncey, who is now 81 and lives across the street from the family home, gave me a tour of the property. As we talked, he pulled out old photographs of the garden as it looked in the 1920's and in later years. As a landscape designer, I knew then that this little jewel of an abandoned garden deserved to be—indeed *had* to be—restored, and that I knew how to do it.

It was difficult to know where to begin. Although the garden area was relatively small, there were so many things to consider—for example, historical accuracy, as well as selection of a time period on which to concentrate restoration efforts. Then there was maintenance of the garden once it was restored, not to mention the practicality of the operation itself; existing flowers, trees, and shrubs would have to be salvaged, and the garden structures (of which there were many) would have to be re-built.

But the greatest obstacle of all was money. The Friends of Anne Spencer Foundation,

"Prince Ebo," a gift from W. E. B. Du Bois, overlooks the pond, which serves as the focal point of Anne Spencer's garden.

consisting of a small group of local citizens, had already encountered many financial problems in restoring and maintaining the historic house. It was obvious the garden restoration would have to be a separate undertaking.

The financial obstacle was overcome thanks to a generous offer made by the Hillside Garden Club. A local club affiliated with the Garden Club of Virginia, Hillside has been involved in garden restorations for almost 60 years. Not only did the Club adopt the restoration of the garden as a project and agree to provide financial backing, Club members also offered to contribute "old garden flowers" from their own gardens to supplement those salvaged from Anne Spencer's garden.

After several months of visiting the garden, studying old photographs, and reading about Anne Spencer's life and poetry, we drew up a restoration plan. It was Fall 1983, and we were finally ready to begin.

Before we could bring in the bulldozer, however, we needed to salvage plants and structures. The lacy wrought-iron trim atop the bordering fence was removed in one-foot pieces, cleaned, and stored. English boxwood, peonies, daylilies, and roses were rescued and moved to the vegetable garden area on my property.

The "bulldozer" (actually a front-end loader) moved in cautiously to avoid damaging the old dogwood trees, the colorful lattice fence at the garden entrance, and other garden landmarks. We worked along the garden's perimeters with burlap, boxes, and a shovel, constantly on the lookout for another rose, a clump of unknown bulbs, a hunk of greenstone, or an old brick that might need rescuing. Three days and 25 truckloads of debris later, the land was bare, except for a few trees and the fishpond, and the garden was bathed in light once again.

One of the first things to be restored was Edward Spencer's underground water line, which terminated at the pond. "Prince Ebo" began to spout water again, and a

Thou art come to us, O God, this year

Thou art come to us, O God, this year—
Or how come these wisteria boughs
Dripping with the heavy honey of the Spring
Art here. For who but Thou could in living bring
This loveliness beyond all
Our words for prayer
And blur of leafish shadows, leaf in ochre,
Orchid of bloom with bright tears
Of Thy April's grief
We thank Thee great God—
We who must now ever house
In the body-cramped places age has doomed—
That to us comes Even the sweet pangs
Of the Soul's illimitable sentience
Seeing the wisteria Thou has bloomed!

—Anne Spencer

Jane Baber White

Wisteria blossoms hang from the pergola, which was restored by local Eagle Scouts.

large concrete semicircular bench was placed at the pond's edge.

Next came the boundary fence, which was restored using the same framework of iron water pipe, with a double-pipe "post" and two-by-four-inch mesh screening between posts. The lacy iron trim, salvaged earlier, was re-attached all along the top. This unusual fence had originally bordered Randolph-Macon Woman's College and had been given to Edward by the College, where he frequently delivered mail on his parcel post route.

Chauncey Spencer took on the task of restoring the purple martin houses. Attaching the 150-pound structures atop the 21-foot iron poles, which were already imbedded in concrete, was not an easy task. In the end, it took three "floors" of scaffolding and an elaborate system of pulleys to mount the houses.

Restoration of the grape arbor and wisteria pergola came next. Eagle Scout candidate Stuart Desso, along with his leaders and fellow Scouts, spent many weekends designing and reconstructing both structures with the help of old photographs.

Although the garden paths were grass at one time, for practical purposes they were restored using crushed gravel edged with brick. Three high-school masonry students completed the job in record time, incorporating a few irregularities that now add to the restored charm of the garden. A secondary path leading to the garden from the house was laid in large flagstone, a gift from the city of Lynchburg. Flagstone was also used to create a terrace under the pergola, where a statue of Minerva looks out over the garden. (The statue was a gift from a friend who admired Anne's wisdom. Today, touring schoolchildren often ask if this is where Anne Spencer was buried!)

Finally, in the spring of 1984, eight months after the area was cleared, it was time to re-plant the garden. Those of us involved in the actual digging were delighted with the beautiful rich soil, which required no additional treatment. According to Chauncey, his parents had brought truckloads of leaves into the garden and had worked them into the soil to enrich it. Decades of gardening using organic techniques had produced an 18-inch-thick layer of soil that was totally unlike the red clay typical of the region.

Anne Spencer's garden as it appeared in the 1930's.

Anne and Edward Spencer in their garden with two of their grandchildren in the 1930's.

Photographs courtesy of Anne Spencer Foundation

The rose garden came first. There were approximately 35 plants, many with unusual configurations—for example, huge gnarled roots with 10-foot stems protruding. We sawed and pruned, and finally put every one of the original plants in the ground at random to see what would happen. Miraculously, all the roses survived. With the help of a local heritage rose expert, Carl Cato, all but one (a lovely spring-blooming yellow climber) have been identified. These include 'Climbing Crimson Glory' (1946), 'Climbing American Beauty' (1909), 'Blaze' (1932), 'Betty Prior' (1935), 'American Pillar' (1902), 'Aloha' (1949), 'Mothersday' (1949), and 'Mme. Gregoire Staechelin' (1927).

We re-planted all of Anne Spencer's bulbs in a little wooded area. Now, each spring, visitors are greeted with a profusion of snowdrops, daffodils, and *Narcissus. Scilla*, tiger lilies, and Quaker-ladies that had been smothered for years have also "re-appeared" to join the others. The local Sweet Briar College Alumnae Club donated additional bulbs to the restoration project.

Next, we tackled the two long, narrow borders that run the length of the garden.

Photographs by Jane Baber White

On one side, we planted old-fashioned purple and white lilacs to form a hedge. We then underplanted the lilacs with periwinkle and bulbs. Along the other border, we planted a full array of mixed old-fashioned perennials and annuals, based on old photographs of the garden: poppies, peonies, iris, daylilies, hollyhocks, rose-of-Sharon, daisies, phlox, chrysanthemums, coralbells, and foxglove, to name just a few.

The central axis leading from the grape arbor to the pond was planted with more than 100 little English boxwood. We decided to use the slow-growing boxwood instead of re-planting the privet hedge, since the former is easier to maintain.

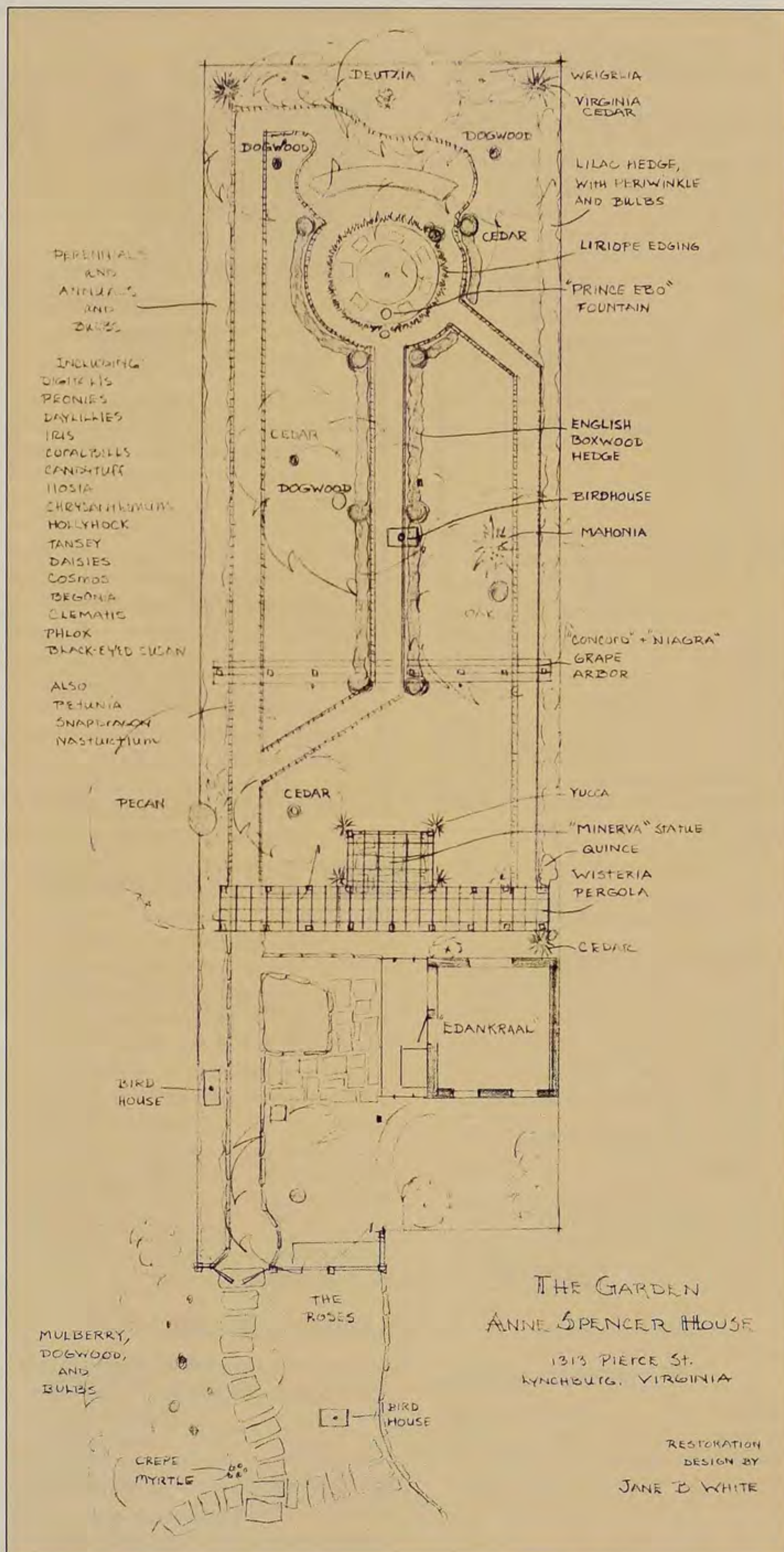
We re-planted the grape arbor with two cultivars of grapes that were known to exist in the early-20th century: 'Concord' and 'Niagara'. Several months later, we were thrilled to discover a poem by Anne Spencer entitled "Grapes: Still-Life," in which she describes the "green-white Niagara" and the "purpling Concord."

In 1985, the Hillside Garden Club received the coveted Commonwealth Award from the Garden Club of Virginia in recognition of the Club's efforts. Hillside was also given additional funds to restore the driveway as well as the colorful lattice fence at the garden entrance. Now, 12 years after Anne Spencer's death, the garden has been completely restored, thanks to the contributions and expertise of many community friends, volunteers, and donors.

I often wonder whether Anne Spencer would be happy with the way her garden has been restored. Although she was undoubtedly used to scholars interpreting her poetry, her garden was never as closely scrutinized as her writing during her lifetime. Perhaps the following verse from "Any Wife to Any Husband: A Derived Poem" reveals the garden's true meaning for the gifted poet from Lynchburg:

This small garden is half my world
I am nothing to it—when all is said,
I plant the thorn and kiss the rose,
but they will grow when I am dead.

Jane Baber White is a landscape designer and lifelong resident of Lynchburg, Virginia.



ABOVE: A blueprint of the restoration design, which shows how the long, narrow lot is divided into "rooms" by the arbor and the pergola. LEFT: The boundary fence, constructed of pipes and wire and topped with lacy iron trim, borders a bed filled with digitalis.

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Book Reviews

The English Garden in Our Time.

Jane Brown. Antique Collectors' Club. Woodbridge, Suffolk, England. 1986. 272 pages; hardcover, $39.50. AHS member price, $32.60.

Although countless volumes have been published about the history of gardening in Great Britain, little has been written about contemporary design movements and styles in that country. Jane Brown is the author of *Gardens of a Golden Afternoon*, which describes the garden-making partnership of Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens. In this book, she begins the story of 20th-century English gardens with a look at Jekyll's own garden at Munstead Wood, which set the tone for modern gardens in the Western world. Through the text and a variety of illustrations, Brown analyzes the gardens at Munstead Wood and the influence they—and Jekyll—had on the development of English gardens in this century. From Munstead Wood, Brown moves on to a wide variety of gardens and garden designers, including William Robinson, Vita Sackville-West and her beloved Sissinghurst, and Lawrence Johnson, designer of the garden at Hidcote Manor. The text concludes with an in-depth analysis of Geoffrey Jellicoe and his "Garden of the Mind" at Sutton Place.

This is a well-written, well-illustrated book that is both informative and thought-provoking. It is illustrated throughout with drawings, paintings, border designs, sketches, and photographs—both black-and-white and color. *The English Garden in Our Time* is fascinating reading for anyone with an interest in the history of gardens and gardening.

Gardening in the Middle East.

Eric Moore. Stacey International. London, England. 1986. 144 pages; hardcover, $35.00. AHS member price, $29.75.

Not surprisingly, this is a book about gardening in the desert. It contains a great deal of useful information about gardening under adverse conditions, such as searing sun, dry winds, and sandy soil. The book begins with a map and tables explaining the climatic zones of the Middle East, including average high and low temperatures, humidity, and annual rainfall. The next section of the book is devoted to the principles of gardening in desert areas.

The authors have provided brief notes on traditional designs, as well as a variety of plant lists suggesting species for specific situations. Included are shade trees, ground covers, hedge or windbreak plants, and container plants. A second set of lists presents species by blooming sequence, plants grown for their fragrant flowers, and plants grown for fruit or berries. The discussion of cultural fundamentals includes basic information on soil preparation, watering, planting, fertilizing, pruning, and maintenance, as well as disease, insect, and weed control. Finally, the book contains an encyclopedia of species that are suitable for gardens in this part of the world. The entries include cultural suggestions as well as plant descriptions.

The book is illustrated throughout with color photographs and black-and-white line drawings. An index and glossary are also provided.

Indoor Plants.

George B. Briggs and Clyde L. Calvin. John Wiley & Sons. New York, New York. 1987. 516 pages; hardcover, $32.95. AHS member price, $27.70.

This college textbook, written for the student of horticulture, stresses the scientific principles behind growing indoor plants. The text begins with an introduction to plant nomenclature and to the taxonomy and basic botany of plants. Sexual and asexual plant propagation are also covered. In addition to directions for various methods of plant propagation, such as seed, leaf cuttings, and stem cuttings, the authors have included information on the formation of callus tissue and its importance in asexual propagation, clones and their creation, rooting hormones, and transplanting seedlings.

The chapter on soil provides a basic introduction to soil science, with discussions of soil texture, structure, and composition. Information specific to growing plants in containers, including soil amendments, potting mixes, and hydroponics, is also included. In addition, the principles of plant nutrition are presented, and the authors

have included charts detailing the various minerals required by plants, as well as an extensive description of fertilizers and their use with indoor plants. The book contains information on the roles that temperature, humidity, and light play in plant growth; explanations of the characteristics of different types of artificial light; and lists of plants for low light intensity. Plant pests and diseases also receive extensive treatment. One section of the book is devoted to how plants are used indoors, including instructions for making terrariums and forcing bulbs. The final sections of the book describe the major plant groups and include detailed cultural information on the 150 most common house plants.

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The focus of this book is on commercial production and the plants that are usually grown for the house plant trade. However, for anyone who wants to learn more about the scientific principles behind growing plants, this book would be a good place to start.

The RHS Encyclopedia of House Plants, Including Greenhouse Plants.

Kenneth A. Beckett. Salem House Publishers. Topsfield, Massachusetts. 1987. 492 pages; hardcover, $34.95. AHS member price, $28.00.

Devoted indoor gardeners will want to add this new volume to their gardening libraries. Its encyclopedic entries, which are arranged alphabetically by genus, list over 4,000 species of plants suitable for house or greenhouse culture. Each entry begins with a discussion of the origins and primary botanical characteristics of the genus, and includes basic cultural and horticultural information. Descriptions of important species follow the general information, and the authors have included origins, common names, and cultivars, if available. The text is illustrated throughout with lovely color photographs—over 1,000 in all—and provides the indoor gardener with a wealth of new plants to try.

—*Barbara W. Ellis*

Barbara W. Ellis is the former Publications Director and Editor of *American Horticulturist.*

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Choosing the Best Rose

If you ask rose breeders what their favorite rose is, chances are they will name one of their own creations. But for some rose lovers I know, choosing a favorite rose is not an easy matter.

Sam McGredy of the famous Irish rose dynasty, for instance, would rather be asked to name the *best* rose in the world. "That would be easy—'Iceberg'," he said recently. (If pressed, he will admit reluctantly that 'Sutter's Gold' is probably his favorite.)

Another rose lover I know, when asked about her favorite rose, said, "Whatever's prettiest in my garden that day." I understand this reasoning. What good is Rose A, no matter how sumptuous, if only Rose B is blooming?

I learned to deal with the question long ago by simply declaring 'Color Magic' to be my favorite. (This response seems to satisfy those people who want an answer they can write down or the name of a rosebush they can mail-order.) However, I squirm when people ask if they should grow it. 'Color Magic' is problem-ridden, persnickety, and selfish with its blossoms until you learn exactly how to coerce the bush into bloom. I tell them not to plant it if that is all they are going to grow.

A good friend who has always loved roses and has grown them for many years recently forced me to grapple with this issue of "favorite versus best." She had bought a home in San Francisco with a back yard that was typical of the area: narrow, fenced on either side, and shady except in the middle. In her yard, half the sun's rays were wasted on a fountain and a small pond, in which languished some straggly water lilies and something that looked like an old lotus. Along the sides grew well-established camellias, azaleas, rhododendrons, and other shade-lovers.

In front of the pool, in the only other spot where the sun shone, was an herb garden. "I love roses," she kept saying, "but I just don't have any room for them. I can't rip out my herb patch—I love cooking, too." I knew the solution, but dared not tell her; she had to come up with it on her own.

Finally, the answer dawned on her. She

LEFT: 'Precious Platinum'. ABOVE: 'Pristine'.

Joanne Pavia

called to say that she had decided to get rid of her little water garden: "The fountain only trickles, the pool's a nauseous green and a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and the lilies never bloom. And I've just *got* to have some roses."

She turned to me for suggestions. I told her that six bushes would fill the three-by-nine-foot space nicely, though I knew she wanted more. "Okay," she said. "I want two reds, two pinks, and two whites—the colors that look best in my gray house. I don't care if they are All-America [Rose Selections], or even what their names are. Just give me lots of blooms, nothing disease-prone, and something fragrant, if possible."

My mind was reeling as I hung up the phone. I couldn't steer her wrong; she only wanted six! I thought of nothing else all evening. After toying with foolish possibilities, I finally began to think sensibly.

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those rated 8.0 and higher by the American Rose Society. (Roses rated between 8.0 and 8.9 are considered to be excellent; those rated 9.0 and higher are considered outstanding.) I realized that choosing sure-fire performers meant that I would have to lay personal preferences aside.

Since the back of the new rose plot would be bordered by a brick wall, the height of the roses was important. I decided that the bushes should be placed according to size, with the smallest in front and the largest in back.

First, I put 'Queen Elizabeth' in the top left-hand corner. The very first Grandiflora, 'Queen Elizabeth' set a standard for its class that has never been topped. Its blooms are pink and are borne one to a stem or in sprays. Once the bush is well established (three years in the ground), it produces panicles of blossoms with 37 to 40 petals each. 'Queen Elizabeth' is not only regal but also vigorous and disease-resistant. Its foliage is large, dark, and leathery. The 9.1 rating by the American Rose Society is no accident; 'Queen Elizabeth' has been reviewed every year since 1955, when it was introduced.

I selected 'Precious Platinum', a dark red hybrid tea, to go next to the 'Queen'. (Its name has nothing whatsoever to do with its color.) Bushes of 'Precious Platinum' are huge when full-grown; they are also heavy bloomers. While some red roses look best in bud, 'Precious Platinum' blossoms look progressively better as they open. The blooms eventually open to the size of dinner plates and are deliciously fragrant. Bushes require judicious pruning before each spring, both to keep plants within bounds and to encourage long stems.

I chose 'Pristine' to occupy the space in front of 'Queen Elizabeth'. In my book, 'Pristine' is, without a doubt, the best rose of the 1970's. Both vigorous and free-blooming, this hybrid offers flowers that are distinguished by their unusual form. The American Rose Society says they are white, though they look light pink to me; the petal edges are carmine. The stems are exceptionally long and thorny. The foliage of 'Pristine' is mahogany-red at first, then turns dark green just before the blooms open.

'Duet' was planted in front of 'Precious Platinum', next to 'Pristine'. Of the six bushes, it is the workhorse. No other rose cultivar I know of blooms more often than 'Duet', which produces fragrant, two-tone pink blossoms. It was the All-America Rose

Selection in 1966 and has been a favorite among rose lovers ever since. 'Duet' is also popular among flower arrangers and others who like long-lasting roses.

Shorter rosebushes went in the foreground. I put 'Europeana' in front of 'Pristine'. This classic Floribunda originated in Holland in 1963 and became an All-America Rose Selection five years later; it has remained among the best of its class ever since. Blooms are ruby-red and are borne in sprays, three or more per stem. Bushes are about as wide as they are tall, and display distinctly toothed foliage. Fragrance is light, but blooms are prolific.

Like Sam McGredy, I believe 'Iceberg' may be the best rose in the world. Even if it is not, it surely deserves a place in a plot of six rosebushes. I planted this superb rose to the right, in the front. The blooms are pure white and borne in clusters. Although there may be peak periods of blossom, the bushes never seem to lack blooms. Depending on how you prune and maintain it, 'Iceberg' can grow to almost any size.

Once I settled on these six fine roses, I sat back and relaxed, confident in my selection; I was happy. Apparently, my friend has been happy, too. She has had her little rose plot for over a year now and calls regularly to tell me about a stunt that one of the cultivars has performed that I "just won't believe." (I believe every tale.) While she sometimes has more blooms than she needs (even enough to share with others), there is never a day, from the first of May until early November, when she doesn't have at least one rose in the house. Not bad for only six bushes in their first year in the ground!

Gardeners in Odessa, Texas or Schenectady, New York who yearn for this red, white, and pink color scheme will find that these six bushes will also perform well in their vicinity. While some roses perform best in certain regions, outstanding roses such as these transcend locale.

Those gardeners with the luxury of lots of garden space might want to try 'Color Magic', my favorite rose. Of course, you can always ask rose experts in your region what their favorite rose is. But be sure to have them recommend their *best* rose, too. If space is limited, the best—not necessarily the favorite—is the one to plant.

—*Rayford Reddell*

Rayford Reddell is a rose grower from Petaluma, California. His book, *Growing Good Roses*, will be released by Harper & Row in November.

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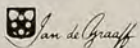

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YES! Please send me more information on the tours I have checked below.

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MAIL TO: Elizabeth Smith, American Horticultural Society, PO Box 0105, Mount Vernon, VA 22121.

Spring Bulbs

In the past few years, I've seen a lot of newly created perennial borders. As good as some of them have been, it is surprising how few have included spring bulbs, which can give a bit of color in early spring and add richness to a border's first flush of perennial bloom in May.

A carefully planned succession of spring bulbs can help cover a lot of otherwise bare, brown ground in March and April. Yet with so many different spring bulbs to choose from—beginning with species crocuses in March and continuing through a vast selection of early to late daffodils and tulips—probably the biggest challenge is to avoid throwing in a bit of everything.

One approach I've used to create stylistic unity is to select a feature of the border or the surrounding area and make what Gertrude Jekyll called "pictures." For example, in one garden I have worked with for several years, the perennial borders surround a large bluestone terrace. Two clumps of white birch on either side of the entry path are important year-round focal points. These birch—with their wild, woodsy grace—set the mood of the garden.

When drawing up the bulb plan for the garden, I decided to play up the birch and reinforce their importance in early spring by underplanting them with hundreds of *Chionodoxa luciliae* 'Gigantea'. Larger than *C. sardensis*, 'Gigantea' bears bright blue flowers in late March and early April that are almost two inches across. Also under the birch, we planted drifts of blue, white, and yellow species crocuses, followed by hybrid crocuses and *Narcissus* 'Geranium', ferns, blue forget-me-nots, and the hardy *Geranium macrorrhizum*.

Drifts of these same species and hybrid crocuses were then repeated in the central areas of the borders. Here, too, the idea behind the selection and placement of bulbs was to create seasonal highlights.

The succession of tulips in the borders was very simple, beginning with sweeps of early-blooming *Tulipa kaufmanniana* 'Heart's Delight', a short-stemmed, carmine-red cultivar with light rose edges and handsome mottled green leaves, followed by sweeps of lily-flowered tulips: 'White Triumphator', yellow 'West Point', and the late-blooming yellow 'Mrs. John Scheepers'. In late May, the bloom periods of the lily-flowered tulips frequently combine with those of a few of the earliest perennials, including *Viola cornuta, Phlox divaricata*, forget-me-nots, and *Brunnera macrophylla*.

I don't believe in digging up tulips, storing them, then planting them out the next year; the extra digging is too labor-intensive and tends to mash the foliage of emerging perennials. I try to get at least two years from hybrid tulip plantings, then add to them the third year.

Tulips, as a whole, do not die gracefully. With the exception of 'Greigii', with its mottled, striped leaves, and others like 'Heart's Desire' (of 'Greigii' parentage), tulip foliage looks very disreputable soon after it is through blooming. To help hide their ragged, yellow leaves, I plant the majority of tulips away from edges, in drifts toward the center of the borders. Hidden behind the fresh foliage of emerging perennials, they can look as ragged as they want till their stalks have matured and are ready to be pulled out.

Another important part of this border's spring display is a path of bluestone pavers edged with *Vinca minor*, commonly called periwinkle or myrtle. This path serves as the main access into the garden from the kitchen courtyard. A frequent route for family and guests, this strip definitely needed a bit more life, so it, too, was planned for a succession of bulb bloom.

For this intimate space, we weren't interested in old stalwarts like *Narcissus* 'King Alfred', whose big, bold blooms are best

LEFT: Lily-flowered species tulips *(Tulipa batalini)* and *Iris sibirica*. RIGHT: *Tulipa* 'Mrs. John Scheepers' with *Phlox divaricata*.

Photographs by Margaret Hensel

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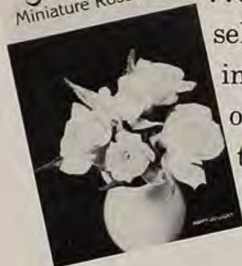

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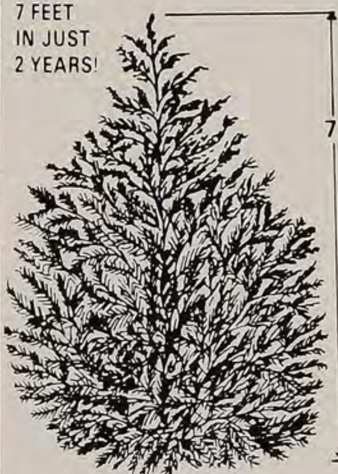

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seen from a distance. Rather, we were after a more graceful effect, and wanted the flowers to be more in scale with the small evergreen leaves of the periwinkle. The *Narcissus* cultivars we selected included the mid-season 'Actaea', with large, gracefully formed, white petals and tiny golden-yellow cups rimmed with crimson; the late-blooming 'Thalia', with three to four large, but graceful, white flowers per stem; the late-blooming, sweetly scented 'Geranium', with its white petals and striking orange cups; and the very dainty, lemon-yellow 'Minnow', with two to four flowers per stalk.

These narcissus were repeated along the walk, in groups of about a dozen per variety, and interplanted with drifts of species tulips: *Tulipa tarda* and *T. turkestanica.* Both of these small-flowered tulips have turned out to be a wonderful addition to the periwinkle. First to bloom, in early April, is the eight-inch *Tulipa turkestanica*, with clusters of pointed white flowers, their yellow centers flushed a pleasing bronzy-green. *T. tarda* blooms in late April; its clusters of flowers are bright yellow, with white-tipped petals. The bloom periods of these tulips usually overlap, so both bloom with the periwinkle. And on sunny days, the blue periwinkle and the yellow and white tulips, with petals spread almost flat upon the evergreen foliage, create a wonderful combination.

The actual bulb planting of the established path was a bit more complex. To help visualize and refine the plan I had drawn, we tried to place the larger narcissus bulbs, by variety, on top of the periwinkle. These, of course, kept slipping through the foliage. After most of the narcissus were planted, we scattered the smaller bulbs of the species tulips and watched them also disappear in the greenery.

Eventually, we got all—or most—of the bulbs, each with a bit of bone meal, into the ground. This task took a great amount of patience and a bit of courage. As we hacked hundreds of holes through the tangle of periwinkle leaves and roots, we wondered (as does every gardener now and then when he or she tries something new) how the periwinkle would fare. Of course, it survived, and the following spring it bloomed better than it had in years.

—*Margaret Hensel*

Margaret Hensel, a landscape designer and consultant, lives in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts.

Sources

HARDY GERANIUMS

Plants

Carroll Gardens, Dept. AH, 444 East Main Street, P.O. Box 310, Westminster, MD 21157, catalogue $2.00.

Milaeger's Gardens, Dept. AH, 4838 Douglas Avenue, Racine, WI 53402, catalogue $1.00.

Owl Ridge Alpines, Dept. AH, 5421 Whipple Lake Road, Clarkston, MI 48016, catalogue 50¢.

Wayside Gardens, Dept. AH, Hodges, SC 29695, catalogue $1.00.

White Flower Farm, Dept. AH, Rt. 63, Litchfield, CT 06759, catalogue $5.00.

Seeds

Michael Vassar, Dept. AH, 14132 Lemay Street, Van Nuys, CA 91405, catalogue free.

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Busse Gardens, Dept. AH, 635 East 7th Street, Rt. 2, Box 13, Cokato, MN 55321, catalogue $1.00.

Carroll Gardens, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 310, 444 East Main Street, Westminster, MD 21157, catalogue $2.00.

Holbrook Farm & Nursery, Dept. AH, Rt. 2, Box 223B, Fletcher, NC 28732, catalogue $2.00.

Lamb Nurseries, Dept. AH, East 101 Sharp Avenue, Spokane, WA 99202, catalogue $1.00.

Louisiana Nursery, Dept. AH, Rt. 7, P.O. Box 43, Opelousas, LA 70570, catalogue $2.00.

Wayside Gardens, Dept. AH, Hodges, SC 29695, catalogue $1.00.

We-Du Nurseries, Dept. AH, Rt. 5, P.O. Box 724, Marion, NC 28752, catalogue 50¢.

Seeds

W. Atlee Burpee Company, Dept. AH, 300 Park Avenue, Warminster, PA 18974, catalogue free.

Far North Gardens, Dept. AH, 16785 Harrison, Livonia, MI 48154, catalogue $2.00.

J.L. Hudson, Seedsman, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 1058, Redwood City, CA 94064, catalogue $1.00.

Thompson & Morgan, Dept. AH, Farraday & Gramme Avenues, P.O. Box 1308-am, Jackson, NJ 08527, catalogue free.

Both

The Country Garden, Dept. AH, Rt. 2, Box 455A, Crivitz, WI 54114, catalogue $2.00.

George W. Park Seed Company, Inc., Dept. AH, Highway 254 North, P.O. Box 31, Greenwood, SC 29647, catalogue free.

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AUTUMN GARDEN

The Country Garden, Dept. AH, Rt. 2, Box 455A, Crivitz, WI 54114, catalogue $2.00.

McClure & Zimmerman, Dept. AH, 1422 West Thorndale, Chicago, IL 60660, catalogue free.

Thompson & Morgan, Dept. AH, Farraday & Gramme Avenues, P.O. Box 1308-am, Jackson, NJ 08527, catalogue free.

Wayside Gardens, Dept. AH, Hodges, SC 29695, catalogue $1.00.

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Carroll Gardens, P.O. Box 310, 444 East Main Street, Westminster, MD 21157, catalogue $2.00.

Donovan's Roses, P.O. Box 37800, Shreveport, LA 71133, catalogue free.

Ferbert Garden Center, 806 South Belt Highway, St. Joseph, MO 64507, catalogue free.

Roses by Fred Edmunds, 6235 S.W. Kahle Road, Wilsonville, OR 97070, catalogue free.

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Breck's, Dept. AH, 6523 North Galena Road, Peoria, IL 61601, catalogue free.

The Daffodil Mart, Dept. AH, State Rt. 793, Rt. 3, Box 794, Gloucester, VA 23061, catalogue $1.00.

De Jager Bulbs, Dept. AH, 188 Asbury Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982, catalogue free.

Dutch Gardens, Inc., Dept. AH, P.O. Box 400, Montvale, NJ 07645, catalogue free.

Alexander Heimlich, Dept. AH, 71 Burlington Street, Woburn, MA 01801, catalogue free.

Kelly Bros. Nursery, Dept. AH, Dansville, NY 14437, catalogue free.

Earl May Seed & Nursery Co., Dept. AH, Shenandoah, IA 51603, catalogue free.

Michigan Bulb Co., Dept. AH, 1950 Waldorf N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49550, catalogue free.

Royal Gardens, Dept. AH, 282 Fairfield Road, P.O. Box 588, Freehold, NJ 07727, catalogue free.

John Scheepers, Inc., Dept. AH, 63 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005, catalogue free.

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