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NOTES ON THE SECTIONS OF THE GENUS PRIMULA

Donald Neil O'Connell
Part Four

Section Vernales. A Section of some thirteen species with the center of distribution in Central Europe, this Section has no close affiliations with any other in the genus. The Section may, for convenience, be roughly divided into two aggregates: the acanliis group and the officinalis group. The former are characterized by flat-limbed flowers borne singly on pedicels, the latter by more-or-less cupped flowers borne in clusters on scapes. The former extends throughout Central Europe from Britain (P. vulgaris) to the Caucasus (P. Sibthorpii); the Southern limits are found in Persia (P. heterochroma), Greece (P. Ingwerseniana), and through the Balearics (P. balearensis) into Northern Africa (P. acaulis var. atlantica). The officinalis group extends from Britain (P. officinalis, P. clatior) to the Caucasus and Armenia (P. amoena), Northward into the Scandinavian Peninsula, and Southward into Spain (P. Lothhousei). The species, with a few exceptions, are all evergreen, although the leaf growth is decreased in winter, and are perfectly hardy. The habit is tufted, the leaves of medium texture, elliptical to oblong, occasionally ovoid, generally toothed, and rugose. In the officinalis group, they are borne on winged petioles which may equal or even exceed the blade; in the acanliis group, they are more often nearly sessile. The species rarely exceed a foot in height and bear flowers in either white, yellow, or lavender-purple. All are without farina. Most are of easy culture and readily obtainable from seed. Along with the Auriculas and Candelabras, this is one of the most popular and widely-cultivated Sections of the genus.

The species in present cultivation are:

**P. vulgaris** Huds. The common English Primrose, ranging also throughout Central Europe. The leaves are borne in an expanding tuft on very short petioles, are moderately wrinkled, veined, slightly hairy, and more-or-less margined. The scape is not generally developed, so that the flowers are borne on their short pedicels in closely-placed umbels appearing to be solitary. The calyx is inflated, with pointed lobes. The corolla is of pale to medium yellow with a darker eye, the limbs flat and often slightly notched. The height of the pedicels rarely exceeds that of the leaves. The true species is occasionally met with in old gardens, but the hybrid forms so far surpass it in the opinion of the average modern gardener that it is really rather scarce in his cultivation. It is easily obtained commercially and is grown with the greatest ease, increasing readily by division and seeding freely. It is very early-flowering.

**P. Sibthorpii** Hoffmssng. This is the Eastern representative of the type, being found in thin woodlands from the Levant to the Caucasus and the adjacent areas of Northern Persia. **P. acaulis** var. rubra Sibth. et Sm.
is synonymous. Outside of geographical distribution, it differs chiefly from the type in flower color, being pink to reddish-purple, with a yellow eye; it differs also in flowering time, which in this variety extends from mid-winter to late March and, for this reason, should be given a sheltered position in the garden if it is to be appreciated at its best. The Levantine Primrose, as it is commonly called, has been in cultivation in European gardens for over two hundred years and is generally considered, along with P. vulgaris, to have produced our modern Acaulis hybrids.

P. amoena Bieb. This excellent species is native to the alpine ranges of the Caucasus and Armenia at altitudes of from three to ten thousand feet. The leaves are broadly oblong, obtuse, slightly toothed, and tapering into a winged petiole. The texture is thick, wrinkled, deeply veined, the color dark green. The scape is variable in height, generally from three to six inches, but approaching a foot in well-grown specimens. The flowers are borne in good numbers on a one-sided, loose umbel on stout scape. They are widely campanulate, the lobes slightly bifid, and of a rich blue-violet or purple, with yellow eyes. Various color forms are known, but not in our present gardens unfortunately; these range from white through cream to pale pinks and rose-lavenders. This appreciates a little more moisture than some of the others of the Section and, along with it, better drainage. It is deciduous—in marked contrast to the other species in common cultivation—and perfectly hardy. While not an extremely difficult species, it is not as easy as one is led to suppose on the first try and will bear careful watching if it is to become a permanent guest. Seeds are not formed easily nor generously but should be obtained, if possible, each year as a precautionary measure; for this species is not as yet well enough established in cultivation in this country—nor, indeed, abroad—to make replacement easy in time of loss. It has been in cultivation since 1831 but is still among the most scarce of the European forms. Mention should be made of the common mispractise among nurserymen of listing various questionable and unwanted creatures under the name P. amoena. These undesirables generally turn out to be an inferior form of P. Sibiricorum or worse. To be sure, the original confusion lies with the taxonomists, but surely rectification could be reasonably hoped for within a period of nearly a century. The true P. amoena Bieb, is not now commercially available in this country or Canada.

P. elatior L. The true Oxlip. Leaves oval to oblong, 3-6 inches long, very rugose, finely toothed at the margins, narrowing into winged petioles, pubescent. The scape from three to seven inches tall, bearing a somewhat one-sided truss, either slightly drooping or, more often, horizontal. The calyx lobes triangular, pointed, hairy. The corolla lips rather concave, slightly notched at the tips, and pale yellow, although orange-yellow and reddish forms are known. The type plant is known from limited stations in Britain and from Normandy; while it is found in varietal form throughout Central Europe as far East as the Ural and Carpathia. It is very doubtful that this species is in cultivation in American gardens. There is much confusion between this and the Cowslip, and its hybrids with the Primrose. Three useful criteria for differentiating between the true Oxlip and the true Cowslip are: 1) the calyx lobes of the Oxlip are triangular, finely haired, and pointed; those of

the Cowslip are less hairy and blunt. 2) The capsule exceeds the calyx in length in the Oxlip; it is inferior to the calyx in the Cowslip. 3) The throat of the Oxlip is smooth; that of the Cowslip contains distinctive folds. Genetic analysis has further shown that the Oxlip may carry a dominant gene which inhibits the formation of hirsutin pigment in inter- and intra-specific crosses; the Cowslip apparently does not possess any comparable genetic factor. The Oxlip would of course be of great value in crosses with P. Julia for this reason, since it would allow the production of first generation yellow-flowered hybrids, thereby saving the breeder an extra year or two of effort. However, not all Oxlips carry this inhibitory factor, and its absence does not disprove the identity of any observed clone.

P. Juliae Kuzn. The smallest species of the Section, P. Juliae was discovered in the Caucasus in 1901 and was introduced into English cultivation several years later. The leaves are glossy, deeply toothed, almost round, and taper into a long winged petiole. They are crinkled, dark green, and strongly ribbed, about one to two inches in length and of slightly less width. The habit is creeping, the leaf-tufts being formed along the thick, rhizomaceous rootstock. The flowers are borne singly on short pedicels and are of a good, bright magenta, with a yellow eye. Its compact, creeping habit immediately suggests its use in the rock garden or scree; and it is here that it grows to best advantage. However, if given a moist position with some protection from the midday sun, it will thrive anywhere. The species is often overlooked in favor of the P. x Juliana hybrids, few of which are its equal. P. Juliae is most readily increased by division of the creeping rootstock, it is notoriously sparse-seeding, and the seeds do not germinate well.

P. leucophylla Pax. This distinctive species is the Carpathian representative of the officinalis aggregate. The leaves are elliptical to oblong, obtuse, more-or-less heavily nerved, 3-4 inches long, lengthening after the blooming period, quite rugose, and covered on their undersides by a hairy tomentum, by which mark P. leucophylla may readily be differentiated from the Oxlip and Cowslip forms and their hybrids. The scape rises above the foliage tuft to from 4 to 6 inches, bearing a many-flowered umbel of pale yellow flowers, darker-eyed, with distinctly emarginate lobes. The type is described as a deep yellow, but the majority of the plants with which the author has had experience in our American gardens seem to be of a paler tint. The calyx is a narrow tube with very short, thin, pointed lobes. The thick, hairy, tomentose leaves give this species a soft appearance which is quite readily recognized once one has seen the plant. This seems no more difficult than others of the Section and will undoubtedly prove a valuable addition to our gardens, now that seeds are becoming more easily available commercially. It is only within the last two years that it has appeared outside the gardens of specialists in this country. Seeds are readily formed and division is easy. It would be of considerable interest to attempt hybridization with P. Juliae; to the author's knowledge, no hybrids involving this species have been made at present.

P. officinalis L. The cowslip. Leaves two to four inches long or better, narrowing into a winged petiole, obtuse, lightly tomentose on the under
surfaces, marginally toothed, strongly ribbed, rugose. The scape to ten inches, carrying a one-sided, short-pedicelled, drooping cluster of small funnel-shaped flowers, much cupped. Calyx long, somewhat inflated, the teeth blunt. The flower color is most often a light to medium yellow but may vary into orange or orange-brown. This species is widely distributed throughout Central Europe, and many local forms are known, few of which vary much from the type. The flowers are noticeably smaller than those of the Oxlip, the flower-cluster more compact. The Cowslip is generally quite scented and, especially in some of its smaller forms, is a pleasant addition to the rockery. Of easy culture, it divides well and seeds freely, indeed great pains are sometimes necessary to keep it from producing illicit progeny with any other Vernales Primulas in reach. The Cowslip is not uncommon in gardens and is easily procurable. It is not infrequently listed as P. veris, P. officinalis L. var. macrorcalyx. Bunge differs from the type in having a large, inflated calyx and is very distinct. It is not improbable that this variety gave rise to the curious Galligaskins of the Jacobean florists. It is obtainable from a few Canadian sources and perhaps here as well.

To attempt any extensive catalog and history of the hybrids within this Section is well beyond the scope of this series. However, several forms should be briefly identified and some comment made of future possibilities in breeding. Many natural hybrids occur throughout Europe wherever the ranges of any two species or varieties touch or overlap, and the majority of these have received names from the zealous taxonomists of the last century. Much confusion exists in the nomenclature; the named forms often merge into one another making positive identification most difficult; and few of the natural hybrids are still to be found in even the experts' gardens. However the following hybrid groups are of such garden importance that to pass over them would be an inexcusable omission: P. x acaulis d'hort. The central parent in this aggregate is the English Primrose, P. vulgaris Huds. It is generally agreed upon that the Levantine Primrose, P. Sibthorpii Hoffmazz was the original source of anthocyanin pigment in the strain. The larger flowers, greater size in general, and—more recently—stronger pedicels mark the Acaulis hybrids from their parents. Both double and single forms are being developed, and new strains, greatly improved, are certain to result from modern hybridization and selection. The color range now extends from white through cream and yellow to near-orange, with lavender to purple and pink to red hues as well. Newer developments are for the burnt, richer shades seen in modern Polyanthus strains. Elimination of notched petals, thicker texture, stronger stems, and breeding-out of the pin eye, in the author's opinion, are to be desired.

P. x Juliae d'hort. Crosses between P. Juliae and P. officinalis, vulgaris, clathor (7), and the Acaulis hybrids are collectively known as P. x Juliae. Perhaps thirty or forty named varieties are now commercially available. All resemble the parent, being a little larger. Increased color range is the chief need in this group: many of the present varieties could not be told apart without labels save by an expert. Most forms lack the tightness of habit of P. Juliae and, especially when grown in rich soil or—worse yet!—fertilized, seem to be little more than Acaulis or Polyanthus forms suffering from malnutrition. The varieties at present available are limited in color to pink, mauve, magenta, and near-purple with intermediate hues, a few white or cream forms, and a very few pale yellows. Good strong yellows would allow of great increase in color range here. First steps toward such forms have very recently been made by several breeders.

P. x Pauil (Wets.) A charming little orphan much resembling a dwarf Cowslip, this comes in yellow to orange, yellow browns, and scarlet. The leaf-tufts do not differ from those of P. officinalis greatly, save in size; and this may be merely a microform of that species, rather than a hybrid. It rarely exceeds four inches when in full flower.

P. x polyanthus d'hort. The Polyanthus of gardens, and so well known as to need no description. Among the many variations may be catalogued the doubles, the Gold laced Polyanthus, the Silver laced, the Hose-in-Hose, Galligaskins, Jackanapes-on horseback and many other Jacobean varieties. Perhaps with no other group in the genus is so much work being done by modern breeders.

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**For the More Recent Member**

An index of articles, tabulated by Quarterlies, contained in the five volumes published to date has been printed and is available upon request from Carl Maskey, 2125-5th Ave., Milwaukee 2, Oregon. Many valuable articles on subjects which have not been repeated are in the back issues. Desired articles are to be had in separate issues at 50c each Quarterly, or $1.50 each volume of four Quarterlies.
NEWER DOUBLE PRIMROSES

Capt. C. Hawkes, M.B.E., M.C., Nantwich, Chesire, England

Among the newer double Primroses are to be found some very beautiful things and certainly they go a long way to rival those lovely old varieties which our ancestors grew and cherished. For the most part they seem quite robust and bid fair in becoming very popular in the future.

Some thirty odd years ago Mr. Cocker of Aberdeen (Scotland) raised a wonderful kind “Cocker’s Bon Accord” of the spray or Polyanthus type of doubles and raisers have not been idle since, but two long wars have somewhat retarded progress in this direction in the British Isles.

We must, however, ask ourselves what is the definition of a double Primrose and the answer is not easily found as there appears to be a considerable difference of opinion on this matter. One school of thought thinks that Primula vulgaris fl. pl. throwing a Polyanthus is not a Primrose, but a double Polyanthus, while the other school says that all doubles should be classed as Primroses.

One of the English Societies concerned with Primulas was undecided and could not agree on a definition, so it was suggested that they make a class in their schedule, one for the single stem types and another for those bearing sprays. This did not settle the matter satisfactorily as most double Primroses at some time or other send up sprays, especially in the Autumn.

If we make an arbitrary distinction of this kind we shall have perhaps at most only two or three single stem Primroses left. In the writer’s garden where some two hundred doubles are grown, the only variety that is always consistent in producing single stem flowers is the old double white with a “runner up” of Lilacina fl. pl. which very seldom throws sprays.

Two very well known Scottish growers were asked for their definition, and both say that the term “double Primrose” covers both types and one further states “that even in the wild Primrose the flowers sometimes spring in bunches from a common base or rudimentary footstalk.”

Perhaps some of our American friends will give us their experiences. One of the newest — Mrs. A. M. Wilson raised by that well known grower, the late Rev. William Murdoch, of Cluny Scotland, is a lovely thing which goes a long way to rival Madame Pompadour and carries sprays of deep crimson flowers. Castlederg — pale primrose, sometimes almost buff, shading to carmine at the edge of the petals is a charming variety.

Both these Primroses seem to have quite good constitutions and are not difficult. The only thing one can criticize is that the caylix of the latter is hard and tough and sometimes needs a little help to enable the flower to open properly. Our Pat, amethyst-purple with purple tinted foliage, is a strong grower, profuse bloomer and satisfactory in every way.

Amidst Cocker’s Bon Accords which are the Polyanthus kind are Bon Accord Gem, rose tinted Lilac, E. A. Lavender, a remarkably neat and attractive flower of light mauve, B. A. Lilac, rosy Lilac, B. A. Purity white tinted cream in centre, B. A. Cerise, bright rose pink, B. A. Elegans, rosy Lilac splashed with white, B. A. Violet, B. A. Purple, purple, B. A. Sulphur, pale sulphur and B. A. Beauty, rich crimson and the nearest approach to Mde. Pompadour.

Another kind — Downhill Purple Emperor, deep purple, and Downhill Plum, both of which have received the Award of Merit of the Royal Horticultural Society. It may be mentioned that Castlederg has rather an interesting history as it was a chance seedling raised about 1930. It appears that an Irish lady sowed some seed from her own Polyanthus and Castlederg appeared among the seedlings. She sold it to an Irish nurseryman who sent out the first plants of it in 1937-38.

Therefore we should keep a careful watch on all our seedlings and perhaps we may come across a chance double and so add something new to this lovely kind of Primrose.

Editor’s Note: Here in America the subject of spray-flowering doubles has not arisen. They have, by common consent, always been classed as double Primroses. Perhaps it is because our conception of the Polyanthus in regards to form, is so deeply fixed that spray-flowering doubles such as Marie Crousse automatically, though possibly not altogether correctly, are termed Primroses. We do have a few double Polyanthus, but these conform to Polyanthus standards. It may be that in another decade, when new doubles become more numerous, the Society will see fit to establish three classes of doubles — Acaulis (or Primrose), Spray-flowered and Polyanthus — for greater accuracy and as a more equitable means of judging.

A Tribute to Mrs. S. R. Smith

For seven years Mrs. S. R. Smith conscientiously dispatched her duties as Secretary of the Society. At first, when the organization was very young, work was at a minimum but shortly, with rapid growth, it assumed increasingly large proportions and no small amount of responsibility. There were periods in recent years when little or no time was left for family, home and gardening.

As in the lives of everyone, there are the rough spots and the smooth and Mrs. Smith always managed with equanimity at all times. Although we are unable to grasp how much time, energy and thought went into Mrs. Smith’s work, officers and members, both here and abroad, will always remember and appreciate her long and friendly service in behalf of Primroses and realize that her work has been of inestimable value in the advancement of the Society.

1948 English Auricula Year Book

The Year Book of the National Auricula Society (Northern Section) is off the press. There are forty-eight pages of good reading, several stunning, full-page color reproductions of Auriculas in addition to a page of good companions for Primulas, also in color.

Books may be purchased direct from Mr. R. H. Briggs, Hon. Sec’y, National Auricula Society, “High Bank,” Rawtenstall, England or through Florence Levy, Gresham, Oregon for $1.25.
**BREEDING OF DOUBLE PRIMROSES**

William Murdoch*, Cluny North Manse, Sauchan, Aberdeenshire, Scotland

During the last few years quite a number of new varieties of Double Primroses have been appearing. Many of the older varieties, beautiful as they are, seem to have lost their constitution.

Even enthusiasts with everything suitable find it a waste of time, money and temper to try to cultivate Madame de Pompadour. Stocks of others have become riddled with virus diseases and though still surviving are now almost doomed. One may cavil at the new varieties that they have not the same neatness as the old or that they have some other fault, but it is up to the rearers to try to produce something along the lines of the past with a better constitution. One often wonders how some of the old ones arose. Some of them are very old, centuries old in fact.

Was there someone who consciously set himself to produce doubles or were the doubles merely chance seedlings. I am convinced that the rare old kinds were chance seedlings appearing among the stock of some rearers of gold and silver laced Polyanthus. These are Derncleughri, or Tortoiseshell as it is sometimes called and Rex Theodore.

I have had doubles submitted to me for inspection and the claim made that they were very old. These doubles showed the influence of Juliana blood in shape of leaf or colouring and this at once dated them, since Primula Juliana has not been with us for more than thirty years. There seems to be something in Juliana which lends to doubling offspring.

One of our most successful rearers of doubles sets great store by this cross, but I am not so sure of it. Certainly Juliana blood does produce a Polyanthus with a thin stiff stem like a knitting needle. Not all Juliana crosses however are of this kind, but there is a possibility in the development of some of these.

The senseless procedure of giving names to many singles of them has been carried too far. Of course with doubles one understands and makes allowance for the geese being swans. The modus operandi of crossing is quite simple and may be performed easily, transferring the pollen from the doubles (where and when it can be had) to the stigma of the single flower.

It is generally well agreed that no doubles can be looked for in the first generation and articles in gardening papers state with facile ease that 25% of doubles may be looked for when the progeny of the first has been intercrossed and reared. This we very gravely doubt. We are told that doubleness is a recessive trait and according to Mendel's law only about a quarter can be expected. I really wonder if Mendel's law applies to monstrosities for this is really what a double Primrose is.

Not in point of beauty for they are exquisitely beautiful flowers, but doubling is an abnormality and we question if it follows any law. It may be said that some crosses or certain parents encourage it as witness (Continued on next page)


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**POINEERING WITH PRIMROSES**

Mabel E. Turner, Antrim, New Hampshire

Seven years ago I planted my first Primroses as an experiment. The plants were obtained from Mrs. Harry Hayward of Portland, Maine, and since I knew almost nothing about species and varieties I left the choice to her. Not knowing the conditions under which I had to work I sent Auriculas, Cashmerianas, Denticulatas and Japanicas. At her suggestion I joined the American Primrose Society and from the splendid Quarterlys I gained valuable help and inspiration.

Every one of the plants lived and the next spring I had my first thrill with Primroses when the beautiful flowers appeared. From then on I was a Primrose enthusiast. I added to my collection P. Juliana and Juliana hybrids, Acaulis, Sieboldii, Vulgaris, and Polyanthus. As the years go by I shall add more and more for they all seem to thrive and multiply greatly. I have had one casualty, P. marginata. It evidently did not like the environment, but I shall try it again when I have studied its requirements more thoroughly.

My Primrose garden is at the foot of a large rock garden which faces a wood on the east. Underground water seeps down from springs higher up the hill. There is excellent drainage and a soil made of leaf mold, well-rotted compost and coarser sand. The elevation is one thousand feet above sea level and the winters are long with deep snows. The blooming period begins about the last of April and runs into May, depending upon the melting of the snow.

The early rock garden plants are happy companions for the Primroses—the Arubis, Aquilegias, Anemones and all the little early flowering things. It will be some time before I shall see them all, but the catalogues have come to fill me with anticipation of more beautiful things to be.

(From preceding page)

crosses having Juliana as a mother, but to say that it follows a law is a pretty strong statement to make. If it was as easy as that we should have a great many more doubles that we have and judging by the demand for them, a demand which cannot be satisfied by their few cultivators, someone would make a good thing out of it.

I have been told that one of the foremost rearers of double Auriculas (there are people who not only tolerate a double Auricula, but who will pay away good solid cash for it!) only expects one or two doubles out of about a thousand seedlings. What truth there is in this I cannot say, but I should hazard a guess that it is not very wide of the mark. I knew a rearer of dogs who used to match his puppies at a certain age against a rat. If the pup acquitted himself well he was spared, if not, then he was painlessly put away.

I should like to say to any who are trying to rear new varieties not to coddle them. What we want is vigor and stamina. The doubles are never or seldom ever so vigorous as the singles. But if we can get vigor and hardiness first and a wider circle interested in them, then others will follow.
SEVENTH ANNUAL PRIMROSE SHOW, MARCH 30 and 31

Plans for the 7th Annual Primrose Show began by aiming at the precedent set by the 6th. By late February, however, it became apparent that the 7th would far surpass last year's success. With a good backlog of experience and perennial enthusiasm, work has gone forward efficiently, surely, and always with an eye to the beauty of the show, best possible service and greatest advantages for exhibitors, and the pleasure and enlightenment of the visiting public.

The sixteen trophies presented to the Society to be awarded prize winning exhibits are an example of the interest manifested in Primroses, the Primrose Show and the work of the American Primrose Society. Silver bowls of varying designs and shapes have been given by the American Primrose Society, First National Bank, Braeger's Oregon Seed Store, Mrs. W. R. Wilmct and Helen's Primrose Gardens. Silver plates have been given by Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Lawrence and Mr. Henry Wessinger. A hammered copper tray is Mrs. Marguerite Clarke's award. Mr. R. W. Ewell has given an urn-shaped silver container and Roy & Molin, jewelers, wished to be represented by a silver shell-shaped container. Silver cups are from Mrs. B. E. Torpen, Mrs. Lois Land and Barnhaven. Two paintings, an oil and a water color, will be eagerly worked for. The oil, by Mrs. Harry Lathrop, a Portland artist member of the Society, is a stunning composition study (17 x 22) using a pot of P. obconica of a rare shade of pink raised by Mrs. Lathrop. Originally destined for the Oregon Artist Exhibit at the Museum, Mrs. Lathrop decided to present it to the Society as an award for the rarest Primula in the 7th show. The water color comes from the National Auricula Society of England through the courtesy of the Honorable Secretary, Mr. R.H. Briggs of Rawtenstall. It is the original painting of the grey-edged Auricula "Seamew" raised by Mr. Briggs and will be given for the best Alpine or Show Auricula in the show. The list of trophies and the Divisions to which they are awarded are listed in the show schedule which can be had upon request from Carl Maskey, 2125-5th Ave., Milwaukie 2, Oregon. Kindly include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The program which changes hourly throughout the afternoons and evenings of both days is an educational feature instituted by the Society. Designed to cover topics of keenest interest they are given by authorities in their respective fields and are free to show visitors. There will be demonstrations of flower arrangements using Primroses, corsage making with Primroses, an open forum on culture in addition to a lecture on the same subject, pest control, hybridizing and hand-pollination, origin of Primula names, Asiatic Primulas, kodachrome slides of the 6th Annual Primrose Show and of Primulas by John G. Bacher and Narciss by Grant Mitsch. Mr. Mitsch, nationally known Narcissus grower and hybridizer, will also display some of his recent originations.

Show committee chairmen are: Show Chairmen, Mrs. M. A. Lawrence and Carl Maskey; Finance, Carl Maskey; Publicity, R. W. Ewell; Floor Plan, Carl Starker; Rules and Classification, Florence Levy; Entries, Mrs. Ben Smith; Entry Advisors, Mrs. Lou Roberts and Donald O'Connell; Placing, Mrs. Leander Anderson; Judges and Clerks, Mr. M. A. Lawrence; Program, Miss Arlie Seaman; Educational, Mrs. John M. Young; Garden Clubs, Mrs. John H. Holmes; Complementary Arrangements, Mrs. John L. Karnopp; Hospitality and Information, Mrs. Florence Bennett; Properties, Carroll S. Higgins; Ribbons, Mrs. John H. Holmes; Trophies and Awards, Mrs. John T. Wiley; Tickets, Mrs. H. A. Harshorn; Membership, Mrs. John T. Wiley; Registration of Out-of-town Guests, R. W. Ewell.

The show will be open from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. both days. Entries will be received March 29th from noon until 8 p.m. at which time judging will begin. For Instructions, Rules and Classifications write Mr. Maskey, as previously mentioned, for a copy of the Show Schedule.

It is expected that the entries will overflow the great sunken ballroom of the Masonic Temple at S. W. Park and Main streets in Portland where the 6th Show was held and which will be the setting for the 7th. A 25c admission fee to cover show expense is being charged all children being admitted without charge. Members of the Society are admitted upon presentation of their 1948 membership card.

Awards for the 8th Annual Show, 1949

An original oil of Primroses in a bouquet painted by Mrs. L. M. Buoy is being offered for the best Sieboldi seedling shown in 1949. Mrs. Buoy wishes to encourage the improvement and development of the beautiful Oriental Polyanthus which is such an accommodating favorite both east and west.

The Russian enamel on gold dessert spoon, one of a complete set purchased by Mrs. B. E. Torpen in Moscow in 1931, is to be awarded the winning Juliana seedling in 1949. Mrs. Torpen has taken an exceedingly keen interest in Julianas for many years and is closely identified with the progress being made in the introduction of new varieties.
FIVE NORTHWEST PRIMROSE SHOWS

Primrose time in the Pacific Northwest is being celebrated by five Primrose shows following the Society's 7th show. The local garden clubs sponsoring the shows extend cordial invitations to all to be guests and to exhibit.

Napavine, Washington
Third Annual Show, April 3rd and 4th, sponsored by the Southern District of the Lewis County Garden Club at the Town Hall, Napavine.

Kirkland, Washington
First Annual Show, April 9th, 10th and 11th, sponsored by East Side Garden Club at the Civic Center, Kirkland.

Grants Pass, Oregon
First Annual Show, April 9th, sponsored by Jerome Prairie Garden Club. The Grants Pass Men's Garden Club will stage a Daffodil show in conjunction with the Primrose show.

Bremerton, Washington
Fourth Annual Shop, April 13th and 14th, sponsored by the East Bremerton Garden Club, at Civic Center, Bremerton.

Longview, Washington
Second Annual Show, dates to be announced.

FOUR SEEDING METHODS

Sowing Primrose seed in soil, sawdust, sphagnum, Vermiculite and Floralite was demonstrated by Mrs. John L. Karnopp, Lew Levy, Carl Maskey and Mrs. Ben Smith at the January meeting. Each one championed his favorite method and held the floor against all comers for the duration of each demonstration.

Seeding in Soil

Mrs. John L. Karnopp defended the orthodox method of seeding in soil as one of simplicity with materials always at hand. She is one of the first to make use of coffee cans, a habit which has given rise to an affectionate sobriquet among her friends. The bottoms of the cans are perforated and the first layer of material is gravel for drainage. The second layer is moss, any kind, to hold moisture. The third addition is the seeding compost of soil which has been lightened by the addition of sand and leaf mold. This can be baked for sterilization if desired. For Auriculas, Mrs. Karnopp adds crushed bone, crushed egg shells and a handful of old cow manure.

Fill the can, but not quite to the top. Scatter seeds, pack firmly with hand or tamp, and if seeds are not too fine, sprinkle lightly with soil. Cut a paper towel to fit top of can, set in water until thoroughly soaked to top. Make sure that seeds are marked as to kind and date planted. Mrs. Karnopp leaves the paper on until growth begins.

Seeding in Sawdust

Lew Levy sponsors the sawdust method of seed culture as outlined by Professor A. H. MacAndrews, Head of Forest Entomology, New York State College of Forestry in the April, 1946 Quarterly, page 58. Mr. Levy holds with Professor MacAndrews that germination is more rapid and uniform; that the moisture content remains stable for a longer period of time; that the seedlings live in the sawdust for long periods developing amazing root systems with little leaf growth so that upon transplanting into soil containing nutrients, seedlings make prodigious growth; that there is no root damage in transplanting, the sawdust falling free from the roots; the notable absence of damp-off and the fact that the material never becomes soggy or dirty to work with.

The one difficulty is in the procuring of sawdust other than conifer. Alder in the northwest is the broadleaved tree most generally cut for commercial purposes, usually for the manufacture of furniture. Any mill cutting alder, or any furniture factory would have the sawdust. A medium, rather than fine kerf, is advisable as the very fine sawdust packs too solidly. If fine sawdust is used, the incorporation of fill-sand could be used to open the texture.

Sawdust must be thoroughly soaked before using, hot water penetrating the mass more efficiently than cold. Put sawdust in sack, turn the hot water on it, let drain, fill containers nearly to the top. Tamp down and sprinkle seeds thinly. From February through April hot water (hot but not burning to the hand) is used two days in succession to bring on immediate germination. This is not necessary but is expedient, the heat speeding up moisture penetration of the seed coat. If hot water...
Seeding in Sphagnum

Carl Maskey likes sphagnum as this medium inhibits damp-off. There is, however, the problem of getting it which is easy for those on the coasts but not so simple for the inlanders if florist supply houses happen to be without it. In previous years it was usually available. Mr. Maskey points out that although one can plant in pure sphagnum moss there is the difficulty of disentangling the roots when transplanting. He first prepares his containers with drainage on the bottom, then a seeding compost of soil, sand and leaf mold, and finally filters the moss over the soil by rubbing it through a \( \frac{1}{2} \) inch mesh hardware cloth. Put container in water and soak thoroughly, drain, sow seeds thinly, place paper over all to hold humidity.

Seeding in Vermiculite and Floralite

Mrs. Ben Smith is one of those adventurous spirits who believes in trying something new. She was interested in Vermiculite when it was first being used for insulating material, and later, when Lily and Rhododendron growers recommended it, decided to try it for the culture of Primroses.

The newer product, Floralite, also attracted her attention. She learned that Vermiculite is mica expanded under terrific heat and that Floralite is pumice, finely crushed; that their chief advantages are sterility, sterilized and high water content, and ease of transplanting seedlings without root breakage. Their disadvantages are the expense and the fact they provide no nutrition to the young plants after the seedlings' initial food stores have been used.

Mrs. Smith uses soil as a base with the Vermiculite or Floralite spread lightly on top. “But,” she stated, “In so far as technique is concerned, the method of growing is more important than the growing medium.”

Akron’s Favorite Seeding Medium

The Akron, Ohio Primrose Study Group has found that a mixture of peat and sand with a top layer of fine sphagnum gives the best results.

Preparing Primroses for the Show

Please refer to Mrs. R. P. McHenry's article in the April 1947 Year Book, page 59 for clear, concise and complete instructions on preparing and potting plants for shows.

How Polyanthus Are Judged

For the score on Garden Polyanthus and the points on which they are judged see Florence Levy's article in the April 1947 Year Book, page 60.

FUNGUS AND PEST CONTROLS

Mr. Roy E. Miller, entomologist, plant pathologist and head of Miller Products Co., manufacturers of insecticides and fungicides, addressed the February meeting of the Society. He stated that abnormalities, often caused by deficiencies and known as deficiency diseases, are usually mistaken for actual pathological disease. Chlorosis (yellowing of leaves and green parts) is usually the lack of calcium and magnesium needed in trace amounts, while the lack of boron usually results in stunting.

As to the acidity or alkalinity of the soil, Primroses, like most plant material, flourish in a neutral to mildly acid condition. The pH of the soil (degree of acidity) Mr. Miller likened to a thermometer—a pH of 7 being neutral, below 7 acid, and above 8 alkaline. Moisture affects the pH of the soil which brings to mind the high alkalinity of desert lands or those bordering on the desert. A soil that is too alkaline inhibits the availability of phosphates but a slightly acid to acid soil increases their availability while too much acidity, on the other hand, results in a toxic soil condition.

The old saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is especially applicable to the control of fungus diseases. There are two forms of damp-off—a pre-emergence form and a post-emergence form, pertaining to pre-germination and post-germination of seeds. The pre-emergence form is controlled by treating the seeds with any of the fungicides made for the purpose. Mr. Miller recommended Arosan put out by du Pont and said that when treating seeds only a little is necessary to induce health, just a coating. The post-emergence form of damp-off is controlled by fungicides which include fermate. Mr. Miller cautioned that all organic chemicals should be used hesitatingly and on an experimental basis. Effects should be carefully watched as results vary with different plant material and under varying climatic conditions, for instance, fermate is effective on Tulips but not on Lilies. Soil which is to receive seedlings can also be treated with soil fungicide if and when desired.

For the control of rot, change location of plants to fresh soil and improve drainage by incorporating rock chips or coarse sand. Try mixing a little fermate with fertilizer for the control of fungi in the soil, but always cautiously and in the nature of an experiment.

The combination of warmth and water causes fungus spores to germinate and develop, entering in the epidermal layer and spreading under the top layer throughout the tissues of the plant. The spray or dust treatment must be early, before the spores develop, otherwise it is practically impossible to efficiently control its spread.

In the control of red spider, those pests residing on the underside of leaves and within protective webs which must be broken, certain organic chemicals look promising—hexaethyl tetraphosphate being good.

Baiting for strawberry beetle should begin in the spring as soon as weather begins to warm and continued periodically through the spring and summer. A bait using sodium fluosilicate poison in an apple pomace is best for beetle control as it remains moist in dry weather and effective in wet. If 3 percent metaldehyde is present in combination with the sodium
fluosilicate, slugs, snails and cutworms as well as beetles will be killed. In buying standard baits, ask for this combination or note the active ingredients tabulated on the sack. A light sifting of 20 percent DDT dust around the base of plants will prove effective against the beetle as well as cutworms. For the killing of the strawberry beetle’s larvae in the soil, dichloro ethalether can be used around the plant. This is the usual remedy for root aphids which sometimes attack the roots of pot-grown plants.

Leaf spot, not to be confused with the natural decay of old leaves in the summer, is controlled by copper spray or Bordeaux.

Important

After germination and until planted to permanent locations seedlings should be dusted at soil surface and underside of leaves every 2 or 3 weeks with a dust containing fermate and DDT for the prevention of fungus and control of aphids. There are several dusts offered in the advertising section.

Question Box

Question: What firm does book binding and what is the cost of binding the Quarterlies published to date.

Answer: There are a number of binderies. Bushong & Co. of Portland bound four volumes of Quarterlies (16 issues) for $3.50 making a good-sized book.

Question: A request for reports from various members on their experiences with the less commonly grown Primulas has come from a Washington member. Such concise reports would be of genuine value to all, and members from various parts of the country are urged to send them to the Editor’s Office, Box 218, Gresham, Ore.

The Primrose Society of the Lewis County Garden Club

An affiliated Primrose Society, sponsored by the Lewis County Garden Club in the State of Washington, was organized on December 5, 1947 at which time election of officers and adoption of by-laws was the order of business. Purpose of the Society is the study, culture and exhibition of Primulas. Officers are Mrs. Rex Brien, President; Mrs. Henry Lucas, Vice-President; Mrs. Glenn Whicker, Secretary, all of Chehalis; and Mrs. E. W. Blaidsdell, Treasurer of Winlock. Program Chairman is Mrs. Henry Lucas. Meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday evening of each month to correspond with the parent organization’s meetings.

FERTILIZING AND POST-WINTER CARE

Marguerite Clarke, nationally known grower of Primrose and Pansy seed, was also a guest speaker at the February meeting. Mrs. Clarke said that as far as fertilizing was concerned, to talk about it at this season of the year was like locking the barn after the horse had been stolen. That a good mulch of well-rotted manure or rich compost should have been put around the Polyanthus and Acaulis in November and that the woodlanders and other Asiatic species should have been treated to a mulch of well-rotted leaf soil and/or rotted sawdust at the same time. Such mulch not only feeds but protects the soil from packing under the heavy beat of the rain. If, however, the mulch didn’t get on in the fall, put it on in the early spring.

In looking around to note winter damage, plants can be trimmed up and made neat by removing the old and dead leaves. If seedlings were set out late and heaved out of the ground by frost action, they should be reset and mulched as should all plants with exposed roots.

Mice are still active in the spring and mole runs should be baited with rodent exterminator. Cutworms and beetles should be baited for at this time and Mrs. Clarke referred to that part of Mr. Miller’s discussion.

The practice of rotation is valuable so that the same ground is not used for the same plants too long. Fertilizers carrying trace elements are good in maintaining the health of the soil and avoiding deficiency dis-

(Continued on page 77)
ADVENTURES WITH PRIMROSES IN THE MIDWEST
Genevieve C. Dakin, Madison, Wisconsin

Primroses have intrigued me for many years. It is well over twenty since I started to grow them on a very small scale in a Northern Illinois garden. My first realization of their beauty and adaptability to our climatic conditions came when I saw them growing — thousands of them — in Mrs. Percy Armstrong's garden in a Chicago suburb. Combined with the colorful mosaic of her rock garden the borders of Primroses were breath-taking in their beauty. Large stands of many varieties gave a long period of bloom.

Mrs. Louise Beebe Wilder's chapters on her Pursuit of the Primrose and a lecture by E. H. M. Cox stimulated my collecting urge. Running them down in nurseries to choose choice colors became almost an obsession.

Then we moved to Wisconsin with all our possessions, including my Primroses. Those early adventures were chiefly with Acaulis, Polyanthus and Auricula. From Mrs. Armstrong I acquired the little Juliae, her own hybrid Primrose Lodge, named for her Glencoe home, Sieboldi in various colors, and Japonicas.

When we purchased a half-acre of land in suburban Madison a dozen years ago, I had the fun of making a new garden from scratch. As we did not build until a year later I was able to devote my time first to planning and then to supervising the construction and planting of the garden.

Our lot sloped sharply to the east making it possible to terrace the rear area by building a four-foot dry wall. The terrace, 55 by 111 feet, gave ample space for a sunny rock garden and shaded areas for Primroses. On three sides hedges, tall evergreens and flowering trees were planted to frame the garden and to give protection from the afternoon sun. The extremely thick turf had been ploughed and disked the preceding fall and with the addition of acid peat made a fine medium for growing Primroses, ferns and wild flowers.

The natural slope of the terrace coupled with careful planning of elevations and paths eliminated drainage problems. Leaf soil, peat, cow-manure and cotton-seed meal have supplemented the soil from time to time.

From a small beginning, by dividing many of my plants annually, purchasing and raising seedlings, and buying such choice varieties as my pocket-book permitted each year, I have built up an interesting collection of many hundreds. My dream of a real Primrose path has been realized.

Cashmeriana, in soft lilacs and white, greets us in late March or early April. Juliae and its lovely hybrids are not far behind in the colorful procession. To me they are the most satisfactory variety in our climate. I certainly agree with Sampson Clay when he says "their amazing floriferousness and precocity of bloom with sheer blots of color in early spring make them unrivaled." From a single Dorothy, purchased but a few years ago, I have made several colonies. Primrose Lodge lends itself to stunning mass effects. A group of mauve-pink Springtime is lovely with soft Lavender Queen Aubretia. Other Juliana hybrids make charming pictures wherever used. All are hardy and easy.

Acaulis, single and double, yellow and bronze Oxlips, with Polyanthus in varied hues follow in close succession. Later in May Sieboldi and Cortusoides hold the stage. Sieboldi Apple Blossom and Alba are favorites. With the blue of Alpine forgetmenots and a few clumps of grape hyacinths one has a picture of enchanting loveliness.

Auriculas are planted in an elevated bed of leaf soil between large rocks. A mulch of fine gravel seems to suit them. Marginata and Clusiana I planted in crevices in the rock wall. Frondosa and Farinosa have never been permanent nor have I succeeded in domesticating our little native Mistasinnica.
choice white seedlings from an English source to set out in late summer. My one Scapiger a is well established and I'm anticipating starting new ones from leaves in due time. Hybrid Pubescens from British Columbia are biding their time in a cold frame. A colony of Cockburniana looks lusty. How long it endures is a question. I'm expecting mine will live up to the reputation of being biennial! Reginald Farrer's description of Nutans proved my undoing. I bought seed from England and a plant from a Michigan nursery. The plant just folded up and the seedlings which I raised and nursed to blooming stage turned out to be a most uninteresting Vulgaris.

Each fall we trim several large prostrate junipers back severely and spread the bought loosely over established Primroses. Lumps of peat thrown on top complete the tent-like protection, absorb moisture all winter and serve as mulch in spring. Other established plants are protected with marsh hay to prevent heaving. New colonies or choice groups in the rock garden are covered with glass wool.

However, I believe the best insurance against winter loss in our climate lies in seeing that the plants are firmly set and enter the winter season in a healthy condition. Plenty of water during summer and fall with peat and sphagnum dug in deeply to hold moisture and encourage root growth are requisites. I follow Miss Gertrude Jekyll's method of dividing soon after flowering which means that the divisions are well established before fall.

I plant my own fresh seeds in a cold frame and transplant as need be. Seeds from other growers I prefer to plant in small flats in January and freeze outdoors in a protected place, putting snow on them from time to time. In a few weeks I bring them in, water them with very warm water two successive days, cover them with glass, and, as soil conditions require, water them from below. In just a few days they are up and the glass is removed. When the seedlings attain proper size they are set in rows in larger, deeper flats which contain a somewhat richer soil over a sphagnum base. As weather permits the flats go outdoors to a shaded area near the kitchen door. A frame covered with white muslin is used as a protective screen.

This year I plan to put the flats of transplants into a new metal cold frame which has a heating cable. If the experiment is successful the young plants should be established in the garden in late summer.

Growing Primroses in Wisconsin is not done with the ease nor the promise of that long season of bloom which the Northwest enjoys. It is only the real Primula enthusiast who has enough of the gambling spirit to accept the challenge to try the more difficult species, here. A keener interest in growing the easier varieties is manifest among home gardeners. The Primrose is taking its rightful place as one of the choicest harbingers of spring.

The first exhibit was held May 19, 1947 in the Garden Center, was exceedingly well received and created a great deal of interest in Primulas. The majority of visitors had never seen hardy Primulas before, could not believe such plants grew out-of-doors and the immediate reaction was a bid to buy everything in sight. The exhibitors were relieved to get their Primulas safely home once more.

A larger exhibit is being planned for 1948 with more space, more plants, more varieties and more Primrose interest.
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

With such loyal cooperation from my fellow officers, directors and committee-
men, I feel that the year 1947 was a distinct stride forward in spite of the fact
that I had so little free time to devote to the many responsibilities of the office
of President.

The increased membership, the increase in the number of affiliated Primrose
Societies, the widespread increase in the general knowledge of Primula culture,
and the steady improvement in and creation of new varieties, are factors that have
contributed to my feeling that we are moving steadily forward.

The 1947 Annual Show was an outstanding event that attracted nation-wide
attention, and present plans all point to an even better show in 1948.

The pressing need for a National Primrose Test Garden, under the direction
of our Society, has led to the appointment of a committee to investigate and report
on prospective sites and planting plans. We are hopeful that definite progress
can be made this year.

Most of us feel that we are on the threshold of great opportunity, and we
pray that we may be able to devote ourselves unselfishly to the constructive tasks
ahead.—Allen W. Davis.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Something new has been added to the Society: the combined office of Secretary-
Treasurer. In the transition period there is apt to be some confusion. There is
also some possibility that we may not be able to carry on the personal touch to
the extent Mrs. S. R. Smith did, but rest assured we stand ready to help you in
any way that we can.

We very much appreciate your tolerance and cooperation, feeling sure that
when the new idea is finally worked out everything will run smoothly to the
advantage of all.—Carl Maskey.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Bank balance, January 1, 1947
Receipts for 1947
Disbursements:
Outlook Publishing Company
Other disbursements including postage, Sixth
Annual Show, Refunds on Overpayment of Dues
and Miscellaneous
Balance in Bank as of January 1, 1948
Savings Account, Horticultural Hall Fund

Mrs. J. H. Holmes, Treasurer, 1947.

REPORT OF THE EDITOR

When the time comes to write the Editor's annual message there is always
but one prevailing thought, a deep and abiding appreciation for the cooperation
and kindness shown me in every way. I have yet to have my first refusal for
articles, and the files have much fruit to yield.

Through the medium of these pages, with your help, it is hoped that a bright
and shining joy in your association with Primroses can be perpetuated. The Quar-
terly is yours and should meet the requirements of our newest and oldest
members. You who have been growing Primulas and who have watched their
behavior and evolved methods of management under different climatic conditions
can be of help to those who are just beginning. If you will jot down your methods
of culture and the do's and the don'ts for your climate, sending them to this office
at Gresham, Oregon for publication, an international forum will result.

The friendships and the work accomplished have given these five years of editor-
ship a fullness and meaning which otherwise might not have been experienced.

Florence Levy.

ANNUAL MEETING, DECEMBER 16, 1947

With the nominees, as proposed by the nominating committee in October,
unopposed, the business of the evening resolved itself quickly. All nominees were
elected by unanimous vote and the officers for 1948 are Mr. Allen W. Davis, Pres-
ident; Mrs. John T. Wiley, Vice-President; Mrs. L. M. McDonald, Recording Sec-
retary. Mr. Carl Maskey, under the new amendment to the constitution which
was also adopted, was later elected Secretary-Treasurer by a special meeting of
the Board of Directors. Board members, in addition to officers, include Mrs. John
H. Holmes, Mrs. John L. Karnopp, Mrs. John M. Young, Mrs. H. A. Hartshorn,
Mr. R. M. Brown, Mrs. Mary Zach with Mr. R. W. Ewell as Past-President and
Florence Levy, Editor.

Society affairs dispatched, an impromptu Christmas party with refreshments
followed. It cannot be said that merriment reigned. Rather the evening took a
more serious trend with the heartfelt hope that winter, for those abroad, would
be less severe than the previous year and that want could be kept at a minimum.
Members who were sending food and clothing to those in straitened circumstances
were given additional support to carry on their work. The feeling of international
brotherhood, the desire to lend a hand while the going was rough, dominated every-
one present so that it was a Christmas party in its highest and truest meaning.

CHAIRMEN OF STANDING COMMITTEES FOR 1948

Program, Mrs. E. H. Bowes. Membership, Mrs. John T. Wiley. Publicity,
Miss Arlie Seaman. Hospitality, Mrs. O. J. Zach. Informal Flower Shows, Mrs.
Florence Bennett. Slide Librarian, Mr. R. M. Brown. 7th Annual Primrose Show,
Mrs. M. A. Lawrence.

PROGRAM FOR 1948

Jan. 20. Demonstration of different methods of sowing Primula seed.
Feb. 17. Fertilizing the soil and preparation for Spring and Summer growth.
Pests, diseases, their treatment and control.
Mar. 16. Preparations for the 7th Annual Show.
How to select your best Primulas for the show.
Demonstration of grooming plants.
Discussion of rules, classifications and schedule of the show.
April Annual Primrose Sale. Guest night and social hour.
May 18. Review of the latest Auricula Bulletins.
Experiences with Auriculas by different members.
Discussion of P. Siboldii.
Informal show of Auriculas and Asiatics.
June, July and August, no meetings unless specially arranged.
Sept. 21. Educational Program.
New Slides.
Review of new books and information on Primulas.
Winter cleanup and protection.
Nov. 16. Other early blooming Primulas, P. Juliae, Edgeworthii, rosea, denticulata.
Christmas Party.
Informal Exhibits, Round Table Discussion each meeting. Door prizes will
be given. Members invited to bring guests. Meetings are held in Library Hall,
Central Library, Portland, 7:30 P. M.
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Bernet, Mrs. R. W.
Billington, Mrs. Alice
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Bishop, Mr. A. E.
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Christerson, Mrs. Edna
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<td>East Bremerton Garden Club, care of Mrs. Frances Falter, Secy.</td>
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<td>East Side Garden Club of Kirkland c/o Mrs. P. B. Charles, Mrs. H. H.</td>
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<td>Howard, Mrs. A.</td>
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