

LIDS NEWSLETTER

John Stahl, Editor Fall 2011

This will be my last posting as your editor of the newsletter. I've been extremely pleased to bring you daylily news from myself and other club members. I only hope you have enjoyed receiving these oftentimes serious, sometimes humorous epistles.

Handling Daylily Seeds in the North by John Price

I read everything I could about this, including the books, and this is a summary of my findings.

Stout, in his book Daylilies (1934), said that seeds may be planted in the spring either in flats in cold frames or directly into seed beds in the garden. But he usually plated seeds in the winter in his greenhouse (I assume at the New York Botanical Garden) as soon as "they were ripe".

Research in 1957 by Griesbach and Roth showed that seeds of dormant daylilies needed to be cold stratified (defined as chilling seeds to promote germination) at near freezing temperatures for one to two months in order to germinate. This is similar to other dormant perennials, deciduous trees and shrubs.

Many writers dry their seeds to avoid rot and mold before storing them. Coral Kincaid recommends not drying seeds because she thinks doing so prevents the necessary cold stratification. I have found no evidence to support this. Some of the folks who dry their seeds report normal rates of germination.

Hybridizers store their seeds in tiny ziploc bags, coin envelopes or glassine envelopes. John Stahl puts a slip of paper towel in the bag to keep it drier and because the chlorine in the paper inhibits mold. Peat and Petit squirt a solution of mild fungicide and water in each bag to prevent mold.

Some writers, like Fred Davis, plant their seeds outdoors immediately after harvesting. But reports indicate a high rate of loss doing this. Most people in the north grow their seeds indoors during the winter or early spring and then transplant outdoors in April or May. Lanny and Micky Morry did a study a couple of years ago in which they

compared growing seeds indoors in the winter with planting seeds outdoors in late April. They found the rates of germination and size of plants at the end of the summer to be roughly the same.

When I harvest my seeds I immediately stick them into small labelled ziploc bags and put them in the fridge for the winter. I have about 1% rot or mold (to me insignificant). I now plant all my seeds outdoors in May. I have about 70% germination. Since I plant between 1000 and 4000 seeds I get many more plants than when I grew 300 seeds indoors.

I suggest two references: The New Encyclopedia of daylilies by Petit and Peat, page 288; and Lanny and Micky Morry's article in mydaylilies.com.

Daylily Memories ~ Part III
by Roswitha Waterman

In the late fall of 1990, I received a phone call asking me to accept the position of AHS International Secretary beginning in 1991. I requested some time to think about it. I had previously been asked to become the President of the Long Island Daylily Society (LIDS) and had turned it down with the full backing of my husband. I had also declined to assume the duties of the Region 4 Directorship, also because my husband had strongly been against it. It was, therefore, quite a surprise when Arthur now told me that I had to accept this job. He pointed out my unusual qualifications for it, having lived in four different countries, each for several years, and traveled to more than 25 others. He told me that I owed it to the AHS to accept the position of International Secretary. So I did and found the role thoroughly fascinating. In my roughly ten years in this job I was in contact with daylily lovers from all over the world. Mail arrived from Pakistan and Latvia, from Israel and Austria, from different parts of Africa, as well as Switzerland and Sweden. I heard from South America and even Australia. It was extremely helpful that I was generally familiar with the climate of each location and could base my answers on that. If I had not been to one of the locations, often my husband had traveled to that part of the world on U.S State Department business and could inform me about it. However, I never heard from anyone in Japan or China (both of which I had the chance to visit myself).

*Surprisingly, I soon found gardeners from the former East Germany among my audience at the Frankfurt Palmengarten lectures after the Berlin Wall had fallen in 1989. They were so anxious to see all the new developments in the daylily world I was showing and described to me, with great embarrassment, how little they knew about U.S. achievements in *hemerocallis* hybrid-*

zation. We had long evening talks after my lectures and I sent them seeds and even plant material from here to help them catch up. They were ever so grateful for it all. They described to us how financially strapped everybody in the former East Germany was. I noticed that gardeners from western Germany took down addresses of the easterners to help them as well. I am still in contact with one of the people from the former East Germany now in 2010, long after I have turned over my official duties to someone else. During my last visit to Germany in 1999, I was presented with the highest award medal of the German Association of Perennial lovers in appreciation for my extensive contributions to their knowledge of daylilies.

At one point I joined a group of volunteers to help maintain the gardens of the Old Westbury Estate on Long Island. Their horticultural director at that time was Carl Totemeier, who gave us all very informative lectures at the beginning of each season about various gardening subjects. He also wrote articles about different plants for the Sunday New York Times each week and was altogether a very knowledgeable man in his field. When he covered daylilies one time in his paper he asked me for detailed information of the plant and visited our garden for in depth knowledge. After he had accepted the horticultural directorship at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx he brought his assistants there to our garden to see our daylily collection. We donated 1400 plants from our garden for distribution on their grounds. Before long I was asked to give 4 hour long instructions on hemerocallis culture in their garden each season. I also organized bus tours for members of the Botanical Garden to LIDS gardens with notable collections of daylilies. At one point Carl Totemeier took me to a sizable, empty, circular area on their grounds. He asked for my suggestions of daylily plantings on it, that could be grown there in honor of Arnold B. Stout, a former longtime staff member of the Botanical Garden. I suggested to fill it with Stout medal winners and promised to help them obtain the various specimens from local members or through contacts within AHS. The project turned out to be a full success. When all the planting was finished Carl Totemeier approached me for the name of an expert speaker on the subject of daylilies for the formal opening of this new part of the New York Botanical Garden. This was scheduled during bloom time of the dayilies and included among others dignitaries connected with the New York Botanical Garden as well as daylily members of the surrounding areas. John Allgood accepted the invitation and shared the speaker's forum with Carl Totemeier on that occasion. A stroll through the daylily bed concluded the celebration. Regretably I learned a while ago that none of the extensive daylily plantings are still there anymore. Successors to Carl Totemeier had their own ideas.

I have written this account of my daylily activities and observations at the request of Ken Cobb in late 2009/early 2010 with a clear mind at the age of 92.

Brian Mahieu
by John Stahl

Brian Mahieu, creator of spectacular spiders and unusual forms, developed specifically for Mid-Western climates, has stopped hybridizing. The reasons are not completely known by this author. However, I do know that thousands of his 2006-2009 seedlings were lost. Brian had teamed up with David Burris of Bluegrass gardens several years ago, and they produced and sold new introductions from 2007 through 2010. Speculations are that the massive losses of seedlings could possibly be due to carelessness, but don't quote me. I am still involved in research and also in the promotion of preserving Brian's previous introductions. A group called The Mahieu Daylily Conservancy has been formed. Several thousand of Brian's seedlings have been planted in a new location. The group's members are hoping to share and make available some of his introductions in the future. A few commercial gardens carry a limited number of his plants, including Lilywood Farms and Simonton Bridge Daylily Farms. A major article about Brian will appear in an upcoming issue of The Daylily Journal. Stay tuned (Check below for Brian's website and related sites.)

Some Interesting Websites for the Computer Buffs

Brian Mahieu ~ www.brianmahieu.com/daylily/index/shtml

Lloyd Spitalnik, Wildlife Photographer ~ www.lloydspitalnikphotos.com

Nature and Wildlife Photographers of Long Island ~ www.nwpli.com

John Stahl's Photo Galleries ~ <http://johnsphotogalleries.com>

Baiting Hollow Hummingbird Sanctuary ~ www.lihummer.org

The Eye and the Camera ~ www.luminous-landscape.com/columns/eye-camera.shtml

Dragonflies and Damselflies ~ www.cirrusimage.com/odonata.htm

Long Island Birds and Bird Watching ~ <http://libirding.com>

Luke Ormand, Photographer ~ <http://birdsoflongisland.blogspot.com>

Simonton Bridge Daylily Farm ~ www.simontonbridgedaylilies.com

Lilywood Farms ~ www.lilywoodfarms.com

A Few Parting Words From Your Editor ~~~

valuable ancient saying ~ Wine gets better with age

Getting old is mandatory...Aging is not

Life is a sport---Train for it!

Any meal without wine is called breakfast

America is, always has been, and always will be the greatest nation on earth.

valuable modern saying ~ Age gets better with wine

Beauty is in the mind of the beholder ~ Stroke a cat, pet a dog, watch a sunset,
listen to some good music

Auf Wiedersehen

