

Philadelphia, April 1991

The weather of the eastern United States is justly famous, at least amongst the natives, for its vagarity. The week of the annual meeting of The Magnolia Society was certainly no exception. On Monday prior to the convention's opening on April 11, the temperatures along the Atlantic coast ranged from 91°F in New York City to 93° in Washington. As I was in the latter, I can attest that it was an unwelcome foretaste of the summer months to come.

Just to fulfill its reputation for fickleness, the weather changed to light rain with a high temperature of 45°F by Saturday, April 13. Sunday saw sunshine and temperatures in the 70s. A bit extreme for a typical spring week, but nothing really out of the ordinary. The wonder is that under such conditions plants of all kinds, including magnolias, seem to fare rather well.

Unlike last year's convention, this year we did have flowers on magnolias. The late blooming *M. x soulangiana* cultivars were at their peak and many handsome individual blooms remained on earlier blooming species and hybrids. This bloom was very much abetted by the size of many of the magnolias in the Philadelphia area.

This part of the eastern seaboard has a long gardening tradition, going back to the colonial period. The

remains of John Bartram's famous garden are there, as well as many other notable gardens and arboreta from later years. The climate is such that trees grow quite well, forming very large and imposing specimens. The Philadelphia area appears to be a meeting place between the northern flora of eastern North America and the flora from the southeastern area.

Beautiful combinations of needle evergreen, broadleaf evergreen, and deciduous trees are everywhere seen. To a southerner, this inclusion of needle evergreens other than pines into the basic framework was what made so many of the gardens visited so outstanding. Within these gardens, it was not unusual to see specimens of *M. x soulangiana* and *M. denudata* in excess of 40 feet in height. Frequently planted with the larger species of flowering cherry and crab, backed by the dark mass of needle evergreens, the effect was most often stunning.

Registration for the meeting began at 1:00 PM on Thursday, April 11. In all, over 90 were registered for this meeting, making it the largest in the Society's history. For those checking-in by mid-afternoon, Paul Meyer, Curator of the Morris Arboretum, conducted a brief tour of the host arboretum. Originally established as the extensive garden of a private estate,

the Morris contains a wealth of mature specimen shrubs and trees. Of special interest as the group walked about were large specimens of *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, *Acer triflorum*, and *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Edith Bogue,' a weeping European beech of immense size; and a parking lot planting of recently introduced plants from Korea. Various magnolias were also scattered about this part of the garden with *M. x soulangiana* 'Lennei' chief among the attractions.

The group reconvened at the Widener Educational Center for a welcoming reception and dinner.

Friday's Meeting

The lecture and workshop section of the meeting began Friday morning following a welcome by Paul Meyer. The scheduled speakers for the morning session and their topics were Dr. Timothy Storbeck, Arboretum of the Barnes Foundation, on *Magnolia*: Root or Fruit on the Evolutionary Tree; Dr. John Frett, University of Delaware, Tree Care Research Update; Charles Tubesing, Holden Arboretum, *Magnolia macrophylla* in Ohio; Tomasz Anisko, Morris Arboretum, IPM Control of *Magnolia* Scale; and Peter del Tredici, Arnold Arboretum, and Larry Langford, completely unattached, *Magnolia* Cultivar Registration Update. A break for boxed lunch gave everyone an opportunity to visit with one another and also experience the ever changing Philadelphia weather - now quite windy and increasingly cool.

The afternoon session was addressed by Dr. Ann Rhoads,

Morris Arboretum, speaking on *Phytogeography of Magnolia* in Pennsylvania. Following this presentation, the group split into four concurrent workshops. These workshops were so arranged and timed that one could attend two in close succession. The topics were grafting magnolias (Mr. Robert Tomayer, Wavecrest Nursery); collecting, storing, and transporting pollen (Dr. August Kehr); propagating magnolias by cuttings—an update (Dr. John A. Smith); and invitro reproduction of *Magnolia grandiflora* and distribution of *Magnolia* in South America (John D. Tobe, Clemson University). These workshops were highly informative and gave much practical advice in their respective fields. Hopefully such workshops will be a permanent part of the convention schedule.

The conventioners then explored the *Magnolia* Slope of the Morris Arboretum. This large hillside planting contains several mature trees of *M. x soulangiana*, *M. denudata*, *M. acuminata*, etc. It is this area also that is being planted with new cultivars and new hybrids. Not the least of interest here are several crosses from the National Arboretum between *M. grandiflora* and *M. liliiflora*.

New Auction

Responding to some fears that the annual plant auction was consuming too much of the limited time available at the convention, a new method of auctioneering was tried on Friday night. During the reception preceding the banquet at the Guest Quarters Hotel, our hotel base, a "silent" auction was



Flower and leaves of Talauma hodgsonii.



Group of Magnolia x soulangiana planted in the 1890s at Winterthur, Delaware. All are over 40 feet tall.

conducted by displaying the plants, etc., to be sold and inviting the members and their guests to bid on each and all by writing their name and bid on a card accompanying each item. By close check on that Gresham hybrid that you just had to have, you could repeatedly up the bid by writing in your name—frequently more than once. Some cards revealed a running battle between two or more bidders. In any case, \$1,046 was added to the coffers while members visited and made those acquaintances that make this Society what it is. Later, following the banquet, selected items that had been withheld from the silent auction were auctioned in the traditional manner raising an additional \$1,040. A grafted plant of *Magnolia* 'Albatross' went for much the highest bid during the evening. Lucky bidder! These auctions, along with proceeds from the seed counter, are largely responsible for making the financial side of our society possible. As dues barely cover the cost of the Journal, these monies make any other activities of the Society possible. Many thanks go to all who bid and successfully bought the auction items.

Saturday Tour

The buses came early on Saturday morning, and many were seen running in the cold drizzle with Danish and coffee in hand. First stop was at the Arboretum of the Barnes Foundation, Dr. Timothy Storbeck, Director. Dr. Storbeck and other members of the staff guided us around the arboretum grounds pointing out several particularly nice specimen trees — *Hovenia dulcis*,

Parrotia persica, *Amelanchier arborea* (over 40 feet and in full bloom) to name a few. As we are wont to do, we shed what little herding instinct we had mustered on our arrival when we came to the magnolia section of the arboretum. Our curiosity and delight had been whetted on our arrival by a single blossom of *Magnolia campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata* that was displayed at the entrance to the Foundation's library. A first bloom from this tree and probably the species in the Philadelphia area. The bloom was fabulous in color and in form. Hopefully a full report can be published soon.

Several old specimen trees are planted as a group, and several still displayed good bloom. The soulangianas and various species magnolias comprise the majority of the collection. Newer varieties are being added as well.

While the group munched on provided snacks, we proceeded out the "main line" into suburban Philadelphia. Our second stop was at a garden recently opened to the general public. Chanticleer, Mr. Christopher Woods, Director, was until two years ago a private estate, actually the "summer" home of a prominent Philadelphia family. The grounds are undergoing extensive revision and planting to better fulfill their new "public" status. The layout is excellent, with one of the nicer stream gardens that I have seen. As the new plantings mature, the garden should become even more outstanding and well worth a visit. A number of magnolias dot the property with many new additions having recently been made. Display



Magnolia 'Wada's Memory' at Winterthur. Tree flowers so heavily that tepal fall was six inches or more in depth. Tree appeared still in full bloom from a distance.

gardens for various plant groups are being established. Now, where can one find *Pulmonaria longifolia*?

Even further into the countryside was the garden and home of Mrs. Joanna Reed. Longview Farm is utter delight! Despite the horrible misty rain which refused to abate, the group enjoyed a magic afternoon visiting with Mrs. Reed and her family and strolling in the garden heavily planted with natives and the best of exotics. Mrs. Reed prepared and served a wonderful lunch to this visiting horde, amply demonstrating her expertise with the herbs for which she is well known. Thank you Mrs. Reed for a perfect afternoon.

On returning to the hotel, the formal convention adjourned. Throughout the evening, a changing group of members held court in the

lounge and adjoining lobby. Good conversation and good people are a heady combination.

The organizers arranged an optional tour for Sunday, April 14. The stops were the Scott Arboretum, Mr. Jack Potter, Curator, and the Upper Bank Nursery, Mr. Wirt Thompson. However a paying job back home called, and I hit the highway, driving through the rolling farmland of eastern Pennsylvania to Gettysburg, then south to Harpers Ferry in Virginia, Charles Town in West Virginia, and points south. One of the best meetings ever. Period. A huge "thank you" to Paul Meyer, the organizing committee, and the staff of the Morris Arboretum.

Board Meeting

The Board of Directors held its

convention meeting on Thursday, April 11. Thirteen of the fifteen directors were in attendance, in their persons representing four countries on three continents. This tends to remind us that this organization is international. A second, and much awaited, reminder is the location for the 1992 convention. Plans are well underway for the first convention to be held outside the United States. Switzerland is the chosen place with time and arrangements to be announced via mail at a later date. The organization of a tour was presented to the members attending with the inherent high costs involved. It was decided that individuals would make their own travel plans with the convention planners determining a point or points from which they could be gathered for the actual meeting. This will allow much greater freedom for planning what, where, and how long you visit while in the area. Substantial airfare savings should be possible on an individual basis.

For future planning, the following were announced as convention sites through 1995: Switzerland, 1992, confirmed; The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, Massachusetts, 1993, confirmed; British Columbia, 1994, not confirmed; and Missouri Botanic Garden, St. Louis, Missouri, 1995, confirmed. No dates have been set for any of these meetings.

New Registrar — Peter Del Tredici of the Arnold Arboretum has been registrar of magnolias for the past ten years. Peter announced his desire to resign this position if a new registrar could be found. Dorothy Johnson Callaway has accepted the

appointment. The Magnolia Society is the international registrar for Magnoliaceae. Thanks Peter for a job well done. Any new registrations, or requests for registration forms, should be sent to Dorothy at 1871 Glensboro Road, Lawrenceburg Kentucky (KY) 40342 USA.

Publications — The Board approved the reprinting of a second group of past issues of *MAGNOLIA*. This volume will incorporate Issue 13 (Vol. IX, No. 1) through Issue 22 (Vol. XII, No. 2). An announcement of its availability and cost and the method for ordering will appear in "News and Notes."

The Board also authorized the printing of an updated membership directory. This will be mailed to all members as soon as certain information can be brought up-to-date. The Board expressed the desirability of including FAX telephone numbers in addition to the present home/business listings.

Four years ago an index through Issue 42 was published. It was the intention of the Board at that time that this would be updated on a five year cycle. As this period will end next year, the Board authorized the printing of the updated index (through Issue 52). The Board provided, however, that the Index be mailed on a charge basis in order to recover some of the printing/postage cost. A fee of \$2.00 was approved. An announcement of availability will be made in "News and Notes."

Last, the Board authorized the editor to have designed a slipcase for storing past issues of *Magnolia*. This slipcase is to be purchased and made available to members on an order basis only. An order blank accom-

panies "News and Notes" with this issue of the Journal.

The Board also authorized the printing of additional copies of the Society's new member brochure. These brochures are available for member lectures, garden clubs, flower shows, etc. If you desire copies for placing in your local botanic garden or garden center, or for any other reason, contact Jayme Irvin, 1460 Zenobia Street, Denver, Colorado (CO) 80204 USA. These are intended to help obtain new members - let's use them!

Check List Update — The proposal to update the 1975 *Check List of the Cultivated Magnolias* was discussed at length. The Board gave their enthusiastic support to current efforts to update and reprint this unique volume. The time frame for this publication, however, is dependent on several factors. The first and most important is to gather together as many published names of magnolias as can be found. It was pointed out by the Editor that this is largely dependent on the help rendered by the membership of the Society. All members are urged to search any published source - catalogs, periodicals, local newspaper ads, etc. —for names not on the list published in Issue 49 (Vol. XXVI,

No. 1, Fall, 1990). Any names discovered should be sent to the Editor with full text of any description and publication data —name of publication, date, where published, and page reference. A photocopy would be appreciated. Please, everyone, help make this effort a success.

Endowment Trust

For some years, several of our members have dreamed and planned for an endowment trust that would provide funds for various scientific and educational work on Magnoliaceae. The structure for this trust fund was established by the Board with the adoption of a Trust Agreement setting up the trust fund and establishing a Board of Trustees to administer the fund. The Board of Trustees appointed are Philippe de Spoelberch, Richard B. Figlar, Joseph W. Hickman, Jayme S. Irvin, August E. Kehr, and C. Ferris Miller. A copy of the Trust Agreement (as well as the minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting) is available, upon application, from the Secretary of The Magnolia Society. We wish this trust fund well and hereby solicit your monetary support to launch this very important project.

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