

# BACK ACRE NEWS

Volume #56

Number 7

## The Men's and Women's Garden Club of Findlay

Organized 1954

July 19, 2011

→ Tour Cottage and Gardens – July 24, 2:00 PM - See Directions Below ←



Greetings,

I am listening to the blessed rain. I hope that everyone is getting the same downpour that we have gotten. It will certainly make a big difference in our gardens and flowerbeds.

John and I watered the Triangle last evening. I was thinking that with the extreme heat that possibly we should water on Tuesday. The triangle looks very good but it is showing the results of the heat. This rain should perk it up. We still got several positive comments from drivers as we were watering. It is good to know how the community values it.

I was reading back through a message I sent in the early spring when I was concerned about the cold wet weather. This summer is supporting the concept that it all evens out. It does look like it will cool down a bit this weekend.

The heat did not seem to stop people from going to the county garden tour. Myra Sustae said there were lots of visitors to her garden.

I hope we have a good turnout for the fieldtrip this weekend. I hope to see everyone then. Stay cool until then.

Cathy

**Garden Tour** – Meet at the Brownella Cottage in Galion at 2:00 PM for the 2:15 tour (see write-up for admission fee and directions to both), then to Kit Walter's house at 3:00 for a tour of his magnificent daylily and hosta gardens. Or go directly to Kit's gardens at 3:00 if you choose to omit the Cottage tour. An evening meal on the way home will be planned among those who attend.

**Help! Help!** No, I have not fallen, but the Club needs volunteer help at the Hancock County Fair: **Tuesday, August 30**, is the day the youth bring their garden produce to the fair. Help is needed from noon till about 9 p.m. **Saturday, September 3**, are the On-the-Spot Flower Arranging activities. Help is needed from about noon till 4 p.m. There will be signup sheets at the August meeting. Or call *Ann Brickner, Marilyn Beltz, or Cathy Grossman*. This is neither rocket science nor back-breaking labor, so if you can help for any amount of time within these windows of opportunity, please plan now to do so. (If you haven't seen the enthusiastic kids at both events, you are missing a treat.)

**Where's Waldo?** Who cares? Congratulations to Sharon DeCooman. She was the only member to hazard a (correct) guess as to the identity of the garden pictured in the June BAN. Although she has not been there personally, she heard of it through her connections in the world of day lilies.



It is, of course, in Bowling Green, Ohio, a part of their Parks and Recreation department. Located at the corner of Conneaut Avenue and Wintergarden Road on the west side of BG, it is easily accessible from Findlay. Wintergarden is almost an extension of Rudolph Road. Follow Rudolph north from North Baltimore to the T-junction with Sand Ridge Road in BG; turn left about ¼ mile to the junction with Wintergarden. Turn right.

**The Brownella Cottage** (from the Galion Historical Preservation Society web page):

Surrounded by many trees, ornate wrought iron fencing and gardens of day lilies, this magnificent mansion inspires visitors to research the history of Bishop William Montgomery Brown.

The Brownella Cottage-Grace Episcopal Church & Rectory complex is significant not only for its unique architecture but also for its associations with Bishop William Montgomery Brown, one of the most fascinating individuals in Galion's history and probably in the history of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the twentieth century, for he was, according to his obituary, "the first Bishop of his communion to be tried for heresy since the Reformation, and the first of any creed in America to be disposed for heretical teachings." Admission cost is \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for students and children 6 years old and younger are free. To get to the Cottage at 132 South Union Street, Galion, or to Kit's house, at 278 North Union Street, follow SR 15/23 east to Upper, SR 30 east to SR 598, south to Galion. Allow an hour for the trip.



**Gee, what did I miss?** A fine tour of the gardens of three of our members. We started at the Browns, toured the hidden acreage of the Lannings, then on to the Sustaes (who were also featured in the Findlay Garden Club tour), finishing at the Royal Buffet for a meal and fellowship.



Admiring the shade garden at the Brown's



The 'back-forty' at the Lanning's



Raised gardens at the Sustae's



Raised appetites at the Royal Buffet

## July Flower of the Month-Daylily

By Bill Jones

Photos by Ann Brickner

Like the true lilies, the Daylily belongs to the Liliaceae family. However they fall into is the Hemerocallis genus and not the Liliaceae genus. The name Hemerocallis translates from Greek into *Hemera* meaning "a day" and *Kallos* meaning "beauty". So Hemerocallis means "*Beauty for a day*" and from there we get daylily since each individual flower lasts only for one day.



While Linneaus classified the Hemerocallis in 1753, the earliest known references to daylilies are from China around 2697 BC. Even though the plants have been know for a long time there is still great confusion as to the taxonomy of the 30 or so species within the genus. From these all the modern variations have been hybridized.

Unlike the lilies, daylilies do not have a true bulb. They instead have a crown, which is a junction point from where the root system, leaves, and flowers grow. The crown is very important to the plant and if it becomes damaged, parts or the entire plant will die. Also, unlike lilies which have their blooms at the top of the leafed stem, the daylilies have their bloom at the top of a leafless flower stalk or scape. The scape grows directly from the crown.

The hardiness of a daylily is often represented by what happens to the foliage during the wintertime. The foliage falls into one of three main classifications, these are Dormant, Semi-Evergreen and Evergreen.

**Dormants** are the most hardy. They are more northern growing plants. In the fall their leaves turn yellow/brown and die. They can be easily taken off the crown. The plants then stay dormant throughout the winter until spring.

**Evergreens** are the least hardy. Their leaves remain green all winter in the South, but usually turn brown in the North. These plants are



sensitive to alternate freezing and thawing so it is a good idea to add mulch in areas this might be a problem. The mulch will also protect them from starting to sprout too early in the spring when chances of frost is still possible. The Semi-evergreens are somewhere in between.

For the most part the scapes are branchless except for the upper third. The number of branches varies from species or cultivar to cultivar. The branching can sub branch as well. Some of the new hybrids can branch 4-6 ways. This greatly increases the number of flower buds per scape, and extends the bloom time. Newly planted or divided daylilies may have shorter scapes for a year or two. In the third season, the plant is usually sufficiently settled that the scapes grow to their proper height.



The bud count refers to the number of flower buds on each scape. There can be as few as 10 or over 50 buds per scape. Generally most daylilies have produced all their flower buds by the time the first flower is open. Recently a new development in daylilies is known as bud-builders. These varieties build new buds as the season progresses greatly extending the blooming season.

Another important factor that makes a variety a marketable daylily is the number of scapes that are produced per clump. Some produce large numbers while other may have a spectacular flower and good branching only to produce just a few scapes in a season. The best results are with lots of flowers on lots of scapes.



Daylilies prefer at least six hours a day for the paler shades, less for the darker reds and purples. If flowers fade, wilt or burn in direct sun, move them to filtered shade.

Hybridizers have extended the genus' color range from the yellow, orange, and pale pink of the species, to vibrant reds, purples, lavenders, greenish tones, near-black, near-white, and more. However, hybridizers have not yet been able to produce a daylily with primarily blue flowers in forms of blue such as azure blue, cobalt blue, and sky blue. Flowers of some cultivars have small areas of cobalt blue.

Daylily gardens should be mulched well with peat or compost in spring. Do not over feed with nitrogen as this causes larger quantities of foliage and less flower ( 5-10-15 and 6-12-12 are good ratios of phosphorous and potash). If the foliage turns yellow this can be an indication that too much (or too little) nitrogen has been applied. Waiting to fertilize until the plant is established will encourage initial root growth. It is best to fertilize in the early spring just as new growth commences, and again in midsummer. Daylilies prefer a pH of neutral or slightly acidic (6.0 - 6.5). They should not be planted too close to the roots of broad-leaved or evergreen trees.





Daylilies look best if given some grooming through the year. Trim away any browned and dead portions during the growing season to improve the plants condition and appearance. Pruning will stimulate growth, so limit pruning within two months of the first frost. Remove spent blooms and seedpods after flowering to improve appearance and encourage rebloom. When all the flowers on a scape are finished, cut off the scape close to ground level. During winter, collapsed and faded foliage act as a natural protection for the crown, but you should remove any rotted or damaged foliage.

Patented plants will have a patent number or indicator that a patent has been applied for. Patented plants may not be propagated without the owner's permission or until the patent term has expired.

Very few pests and diseases trouble Hemerocallis, slugs and snails being the major hazard. Sometimes aphids or thrips can cause failure of the flower buds to open and plants grown indoors can be affected by red spider. Daylilies are not troubled by lily beetle or any other problems of bulbous lilies. Root-knot nematodes may be a problem if your subdivision is on former cropland (especially soybean and tobacco land). Except for crown rot, diseases are not a daylily issue. Crown rot seldom occurs but it is frequently fatal. Having a well-drained soil and not transplanting daylilies during the summer heat reduces crown rot potential.



The Tawny Daylily (*Hemerocallis fulva*), and the sweet-scented Lemon-lily (*H. lilioasphodelus*) were early imports from England to 17th-century American gardens and soon escaped from those gardens. The introduced Tawny Daylily is now common in many natural areas, and some people think that it is a native wildflower. Its nonscientific names include Railroad Daylily and Roadside Daylily, Outhouse Lily, Tiger Lily, and Wash-house Lily.

The flowers of some species are edible and are used in Chinese cuisine.



Sharon DeCooman, Ann and George Brickner and Kit Walter are members of our Garden Club who are serious growers of daylilies. The gardens of Ann and George and Kit are listed by the American Hemerocallis Society as Display Gardens. Sharon is planning to obtain this status for her gardens as well.

Sharon DeCooman tells us that she personally grows about 500 named varieties (daylilies that were bred and registered by others) and several thousand seedlings. Those seedlings are evaluated for up to 3 years. At that time a decision is made to discard the plant if it doesn't live up to certain standards or keep for possible introduction. Sharon says "I have not registered any myself but hope to do so in the future. I particularly like spidery types and

daylilies with teeth and hooks on the edges. Since there are over 60,000 named daylilies, anything registered by me would have to be unique. To develop my own breeding lines, I have purchased daylilies that were hybridized by others with the traits I like. Eventually the hybridizer will rely on their own lines to introduce new flowers, while occasionally using outside genetic material. Just think, every seed produced by a cross of two daylilies, will be different from its siblings. Just like all your children, no two will be the same. This just opens a huge opportunity for unique traits. I would encourage anyone who wants to see the vast array of daylilies to visit a daylily garden and see them growing in person. Blooming starts in early June with peak bloom in early to mid July. Anyone is welcome to stop by my garden during bloom season and be prepared to be inspired by the beauty of the daylily.

Ann and George Brickner offer the following thoughts about daylilies. They have heard more than one person say they don't like daylilies because they only bloom for one day and then they are gone. They remember a couple years ago when they had a group visiting their gardens one morning right after an especially nasty storm blew through shredding almost every daylily bloom for the day. We were all disappointed, but the next morning when we walked around, the daylilies were all perfect again!



Ann tells us that, "The secret of beautiful daylily beds is having a lot of different ones. Some start blooming in June, most in July and August, but some continue on right up until the first hard frost. That is IF they have sufficient water and fertilizer. While it is true that they are very easy to grow, providing a sunny spot, water, and fertilizer make them perform even better." Ann tells us, "I was sick in 2007 when our big daylily bed got flooded shortly after we had finished planting it. But, since it had been so dry all summer, they said, 'Oh, that was a nice drink of water!' And they started blooming again and continued right up till the frost."

Ann and George also report that, "Reblooming is a desirable trait, which many hybridizers are trying to achieve. Jamie Gossard and Richard Norris are among several Ohioans trying to extend the bloom time in their 'babies.' We also look for early bloomers and late ones. When you have several (or LOTS) of each, you will really have a great display. As each clump grows, more and more flower scapes produce more and more flowers each day. The bloom time of each clump increases as it grows. It is always good to ask growers about bloom time in their gardens. Your results should be similar to those in other local gardens. It is also good to visit several times during the season to see what beauties are blooming when."

"We have at least 500 registered daylilies in our gardens, which we have purchased from Florida to Minnesota and Nebraska to the Carolinas. However, mostly we buy from Ohio and other northern growers. Many people in Ohio grow and sell daylilies. The advantage of buying from someone in zone 5 or lower is hardiness. It takes us two years to see flowers on any of our new creations. But with the longer growing season in Florida and other southern states, many of the big hybridizers have located in the southern states since they see results faster. Some of those flowers are hardy and perform well here, while others just do not do well. I do not like to spend \$100 or more on a double fan of some new cultivar and find out the hard way that it does not do well in zone 5!"

"Visitors are always welcome to wander around in our gardens and see the amazing daylily flowers that are new and perfect every morning."

In addition to the invitation to visit Ann and George Brickner's and Sharon DeCooman's gardens we also are planning a visit to Kit Walter's gardens as a Garden Club Day Trip on Sunday, July 24. I am sure that a visit to these gardens will convince you that there is a need for these beautiful plants somewhere in your own landscape.

#### Club Officers, 2011

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