Lilacs bloomed in March when the Arnold Arboretum presented a display focusing on the diversity of lilacs at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's Spring Flower Show. Since lilacs are rarely shown as forced plants, the exhibit drew applause from both the public and judges. On opening day it received the Ruth S. Thayer Prize, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's $1000 cash prize, a Silver Medal, an Educational Award, and a Cultural Commendation.

One of the premier awards in the show, the Ruth S. Thayer Prize, was given for the Arboretum's presentation of Syringa vulgaris 'Frederick Law Olmsted.' In keeping with the rules of the award, this free-flowering, lightly scented white lilac has not yet been introduced commercially. A seedling of 'Rochester' with a globose habit, 'Frederick Law Olmsted,' was selected by Richard (Dick) Fenicchia, formerly Park Superintendent, Highland Park, Monroe County Parks Commission, Rochester, New York.

The Arboretum's Chief Plant Propagator and resident lilac specialist, Jack Alexander, won high praise from both experts and the public for achieving the "impossible" in forcing the plants for opening night.

New Englanders are known for having a great affection for lilacs — witness the crowds that visit the Arboretum each Lilac Sunday (May 20, 1990!). Peak visitation of 43,000 is said to have been reached in 1941. But during their ten-day appearance at the show more than 180,000 visitors had an opportunity to look, sniff and "select" their favorites. The exhibit included some of the classic French hybrids ('Mme Lemoine,' 'President Grevy') as well as the eye-catching Syringa vulgaris 'Sensation' with its picotee edging of white on the purple blossoms. Syringa x prestoniae 'Charles Hepburn' and Syringa x chinensis added tones of warm mauve-pink. Two "standard" Syringa meyeri 'Palibin' marked the entry to a rustic pathway and a small weathered bench surrounded by Syringa patula 'Miss Kim'.

During the ten-day run of the show lilacs and other plants were monitored, groomed and changed on a daily basis. The efforts were rewarded with the prestigious Arno H. Nehrling Award, judged on Thursday and presented "to the exhibitor who executes an original design, who stages a display of excellence, who sets up on schedule, and maintains the exhibit in top condition throughout the Show."

The Arboretum thanks Kurt Tramposch of Weir Meadow Nursery and Dale Chapman for assistance in obtaining plants, Chris De Rosa for the loan of stone, and David Kersey for the teak bench. The exhibit was designed and coordinated by Nan Sinton and Jack Alexander with much help from all the Arboretum staff and volunteers.
CHINESE PENJING AND JAPANESE BONSAI

Despite the fact that the Chinese originated the concept of miniaturizing trees in containers over 1200 years ago, most Westerners are familiar with this absorbing form of gardening only by way of the much younger Japanese bonsai. For a variety of historical reasons, distinctive penjing styles are virtually unknown to Americans.

The Arnold Arboretum, which has recently acquired ten specimens of penjing from China, is honored to have the opportunity to present a lecture/demonstration on penjing styles and techniques by Mr. Hu Yunhua, a leading connoisseur and practitioner of the ancient art. Among his publications, Chinese Penjing, Miniature Trees and Landscapes, and Penjing the Chinese Art of Miniature Gardens have been translated into English.

This one-of-a-kind event will be held on Friday, April 27, from 6:30 to 8:30 at the Hunnewell Visitor Center. The fee is $15 for members and $18 for non-members.

On Tuesday, April 10 from 3:30 to 4:30 at the Hunnewell Visitor Center, Arboretum staff member Peter Del Tredici will present a slide-lecture on the history of the Larz Anderson bonsai collection, the oldest in North America. The lecture will be followed by a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the collection. The fee is $8 for members, $10 for non-members.

THURSDAY EVENING LECTURES

Gardens of America, Thursday, April 12, by Diane Kostial McGuire.

From the simple herb gardens of New England colonists through the imposing gardenesque designs of the Victorians to contemporary California outdoor rooms, this slide-lecture will illustrate the themes inherent in an astonishing range of American garden visions and their relationship to the cultural patterns of their times.

Mixing It Up in the Mixed Border. Thursday, April 19, by Elsa Bakalar.

Creating a long-blooming "mixed border" entails going beyond the familiar range of plants. While perennials are the backbone of the summer garden, the adventurous gardener goes a step further and introduces summer bulbs and unusual annuals to give a range of color in flower and foliage and keep a garden glowing into the fall.

Plant Hunting in Kashmir. Thursday, April 26, by Christopher Chadwell.

This lecture on the woody plants, perennials, and alpines of Kashmir will include cultural as well as botanical information about this beautiful part of the world by a knowledgeable and well-travelled botanist.

All lectures are open to the public and will be held at the Hunnewell Visitor Center from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. The fee is $12 for members and $15 for non-members.

THE RHODODENDRONS ARE COMING

The Massachusetts Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will be hosting the annual National Convention at the Tara Hyannis Resort and Hotel from Wednesday, May 30 through Sunday, June 3, 1990.

The theme of the convention is "Rhododendrons for the 90's: The Northeast Perspective," and will feature hardy, adaptable plants with attractive foliage, improved color, and an extended blooming season. The Convention will offer numerous tours, lectures, and workshops, a flower truss show, and a plant sale. Additional information may be obtained from Anne Reisch at (508) 371-0755 after business hours.
TWO NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

The Arnold Arboretum Plant Inventory

"New and improved, updated and easy to use" may sound like advertising copy, but it serves to describe the recently published Plant Inventory. A major revision of the inventory of plants in the Arnold Arboretum collection has been made from the recently completed computerized plant records database. Each plant in the Inventory now is listed:

- alphabetically by scientific name
- in clear, readable type
- with an indication of collection in the wild
- with Arboretum map coordinates

This edition, three times the size of the previous Arnold Arboretum Plant Inventory, contains a wealth of information about the approximately 6,000 taxa that make up the Living Collections of the Arboretum. It also includes an index of common names and a grid map for locating plants on the grounds. The cost is $21.00 including postage and handling within the United States. Foreign orders with payment in U.S. funds should add $4.00 per book. Send orders to: The Bookstore, Arnold Arboretum, 125 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

Flora of the Lesser Antilles

The Arnold Arboretum is proud to announce that the six-volume Flora of the Lesser Antilles, a long-term project of Dr. Richard A. Howard, formerly Director of the Arnold Arboretum and recently appointed Vice-President for Science, New York Botanical Garden, are now available.

These six volumes constitute the first comprehensive flora of the area, presenting a keys to genera as well as species. For each genus and species a complete modern description is given which includes color as well as measurements of floral parts. The descriptions are followed by a listing of each plant's general distribution as well as a list of its distribution within the Lesser Antilles. All volumes are profusely illustrated with line drawings that are both highly artistic and accurate. All known species reported from the Lesser Antilles, both introduced and native, are included.

All volumes in the series are available, either individually or as part of a full set, which is available at the special price, including shipping, of $260 (add $5 for shipping outside the US). For volumes 4, 5, and 6 only, the special price is $205.

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Checks should be made payable to the Arnold Arboretum and all orders should be addressed to the attention of: Frances Maguire, Arnold Arboretum, 125 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

BOOKSTORE OFFERINGS

The recently expanded Bookstore wants to remind all members of their benefit in taking advantage of their 10% discount. Realizing that many members are out of state, we will offer book and other merchandise selections via the Arnoldia insert. They will include new publications and products developed especially for the Arboretum. Your purchases help support the Arboretum and its programs.
TREE
CHEERS FOR
KIDS AN
ARBOR DAY
EVENT

To herald the coming of spring, and as part of a tradition of tree planting, the Arboretum will hold its annual Arbor Day celebration on Sunday, April 29. Winning elementary school poets who have been selected from among this year’s Tree Cheers for Kids poetry contestants will be present to read poetry at the tree-planting ceremony. "Billy B.," the talented natural science song-and-dance man, will host this engaging ceremony that honors the bond between children and their feelings and imaginings about trees. These events, which will begin at 2:00 p.m., will be followed by Billy B. in concert performing such now-famous songs as "The Rock and Roll of Photosynthesis."

A variety of other activities will occur throughout the day including vegetable and fruit printing, talks with a state forester, tree-seed planting in take-home containers, tree games, and visits from urban wildlife.

If you would like to be involved as a volunteer for part of the day, please contact Diane Syverson, Children’s Program Director, at (617) 524-1718.

1988 Arbor Day poetry contest winner, Julia Turner, helps plant a tree at the Arnold Arboretum

PARKS DEPARTMENT AND ARBORETUM WORKING TOGETHER

The following memorandum was recently issued by Lawrence A. Dwyer, commissioner of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department.

The 1000-year lease the Parks and Recreation Department has with the Arnold Arboretum constitutes the oldest park partnership in the City of Boston. Under the terms of the lease the Arnold Arboretum is responsible for the "living collection" as well as buildings. The Parks Department is responsible for the infrastructure—the roads, drainage, walls, etc.—and safety.

We enjoy a good relationship with the Arnold Arboretum. The Boston Park Rangers, begun as a program in the travelled Bussey Hill road and sidewalks as well as drinking fountain repairs was articulated. This fall I met with the Director of the Arnold Arboretum, Dr. Robert Cook, and this need was again brought to my attention. The Parks Planning and Development unit has examined the full range of needs determined by a master plan written by the Arnold staff and feels this is an appropriate project. As a result of this and my discussions with Dr. Cook, I have asked that bid documents be prepared and work begin on this project. I thank you for your continued interest in the Parks and Recreation Department and the Arnold Arboretum.

If you have any questions please contact Victoria Williams at 725-4505.