

From Simple Beginnings

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By Karen Ciula

Franklin Park has been an important Columbus, Ohio feature since 1852. In its history it has been a county and state fairground, a public park, a temporary zoo, a popular site for weddings and community events, and the site of the 1992 Ameriflora exposition. The beautiful Conservatory, originally dedicated in 1895, had been enlarged, and displays from many countries around the world graced the grounds. The 1992 AHS convention met in Columbus that summer, and attendees visited the daylily garden created by Metropolitan Columbus Daylily Society volunteers for that 7-month long exposition.

Although that first garden was dismantled in 1999, the concept of developing a showcase for historic daylily cultivars hybridized by Ohioans was renewed when the society celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2005. In a partnership with the Franklin Park Conservatory, MCDS volunteers began planting Ohio-bred cultivars from the 1920s through the 2000s in five beds adjacent to the Tour Bus Entrance. In the first year 159 cultivars were donated to the project, and it became an AHS Historic Daylily Display Garden in 2006. Noting how well the daylilies flourished after only one year, hybridizers and members from other daylily societies began donating their favorites, and the project grew far beyond original expectations.

When the tour buses arrive at the Conservatory on July 13-14, 2012, attendees of the AHS national convention will see 15 beds with over 700 registered cultivars from 80 Ohio hybridizers. Besides that, the garden showcases an entire Stout collection, a collection of species daylilies, plus early hybrids including *Hemerocallis* 'Apricot' (Yeld, 1893) and 22 early 20th century cultivars.

Many will gravitate to the AHS Award-winners beds and stunning recent introductions from well-known Ohio hybridizers Jamie Gossard, Dan Bachman, Richard Norris, Curt Hanson, Steve Moldovan, and others. However, the concept promoted by MCDS coordinators Alan Hersh and Karen Ciula from the beginning was to encourage every Ohioan hybridizing and registering a daylily to be recognized in the collection.

Since 2005 Alan and Karen have found back yard pollen dabbers who named their creations for friends, relatives, and mentors. Some will happily register only a few while others may go on to become well known and mentors to future hybridizers. We want to introduce 13 new Ohio hybridizers and their flowers registered after 2005.

One such hybridizer was Shirley Farmer, who founded the Midwest Hybridizers Group in the Dayton, Ohio area and mentored many others but did not register any of her own seedlings. Shirley's toothy *H.* 'Shabby Chic' (Farmer-Stegall, 2010) was registered posthumously. Shirley mentored Bob Faulkner, who hybridized for 15 years before registering *H.* 'Dr Jules Michael Vinkman (Faulkner, 2007).

Steve Moldovan's influence on the work of Mike and Sandy Holmes indirectly led to the work of Kim McCutcheon, who has registered 22 daylilies since 2009, including *H.* 'Tornado Chaser' (McCutcheon, 2009).

In Central Ohio Jamie Gossard has mentored many of the MCDS members, including Jane Saliaris and Gerald Bushong, whose seedling collections can be seen in Jamie's Heavenly Gardens on next year's tour. Jane has registered 2 daylilies to date, *H.* 'Bronzed Apollo' (Saliaris, 2007) and 'Emerald Pinwheel' (Saliaris, 2010). Ten of Gerald's 33 introductions are in our garden, including *H.* 'Wonderous Dreams' (Bushong, 2010). Brian Burley, previously a rose hybridizer, has registered 3 daylilies, including *H.* 'Dazzling Debbie' (Burley, 2011).

Steve Williams honors one of the MCDS founders Bernie Grebus with *H.* 'Bernie's Fault' (Williams-S, 2009). Cindy Osman, whose garden will also be on the tour, has one registration *H.* 'Nova Jane' (Osman, 2010), and her mother Bonnie Singer registered *H.* 'Grammy's Little Noah' (Singer, 2010) for her grandson.

Northern Ohio's new hybrids include John Hric's *H.* 'Walking the Pattern' (Hric, 2011), Dave Winter's *H.* 'Noe Claire' (Winter, 2010), Sara Knackstedt's *H.* 'Merry Marnie' (Knackstedt, 2010), and Amber Strobe-Ward's *H.* 'Dancing in a Pink Dress' (Bachman-Strobe, 2008).

Karen Ciula welcomes contributions from any Ohio hybridizer not already represented in the Ohio Hybridizers Historic Daylily Garden. Contact her at kciula@columbus.rr.com. A complete list of holdings and 700 photos can be seen at www.columbusdaylilies.org.