



THE HAAG MEMORIAL CACTUS GARDEN

The membership of the 1967 HAAG MEMORIAL CACTUS GARDEN committee is: chairman, Mrs. Alice Wanner, members — Mr. Alan Mollison and Mr. Charles Trimble.

The Tucson Cactus & Botanical Society created and sponsors this fine Memorial Garden. We gave it to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum for the enjoyment and education of all who visit there. We shall always be greatly interested in its future and in constantly extending it. As an individual member of our Society, are you actively and effectively working toward this goal with your fellow members? Definitely, all members must join in this effort in order to assure the perpetuity of this beautiful and very worthwhile part of the Museum.

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Josephine Shelby
Editor

Hugh Sloan
Ass't. Editor

THE CHATTER BOX

THE MEMBERSHIP ROSTER printed in this issue will be of interest and use to all members of our Society, and perhaps to out-of-state subscribers to Cactus Capital Chatter.

VOLUME III First Quarter 1967 No. 1

Speaking of members, we gleaned the following from Color Slide Division Bulletin, Photographic Society of America:

- A lot of club members are like wheelbarrows—————They are not good unless pushed.
- Some are like canoes————— They need to be paddled.
- Some are like kites————— If you do not keep a string on them, they will fly away.
- Some are like footballs————— You can't tell which way they will bounce.
- Some are like balloons————— Full of wind and ready to blow up.
- SOME ARE LIKE A GOOD WATCH————— Open faced, pure gold, quietly busy, and full of good works.

Mr. H. Scott Thomas, a member of our Society, is like a good watch as expressed above. Through the many months of his membership, he has quietly and generously operated his fine mimeograph machine when our group has needed to print information. We are most grateful to you, Mr. Thomas.

WANTED AND NEEDED: "GOOD WATCHES" TO ASSIST EDITOR OF YOUR CACTUS CAPITAL CHATTER STAFF. Your CHATTER editor cannot possibly know the many hidden talents of our large membership. Now, among you are persons who could and should assist in putting the CHATTER together. Can you type accurately? Can you read proof? Would you enjoy reading various publications that we receive from other similar organizations? Then, choose any material from them suitable for us to publish? Would you stick address labels and stamps on mailing envelopes, stuff the envelopes, then close them for mailing? If you can help for only one quarterly publication, your services are most welcome and needed. Of course, the CHATTER needs permanent assistants as well.

Please write to me at once, what services you will volunteer. My address is:
Mrs. Josephine K. Shelby, P.O. Box 5256, Tucson, Arizona 85703

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TREASURES FOR SALE! NOW!

Hugh B. Copenhaver, a former president of the Tucson Cactus and Botanical Society, offers FOR SALE, his complete cactus collection, part or all. He has many rare and specimen plants in this collection of approximately 500 varieties of cactus and other succulents. His mammillaria collection includes about 80 named varieties.

This is a true bargain! His house at 7020 Firenze Drive also is For Sale. You can buy it and receive free this excellent cactus collection. Please phone Hugh for an appointment to see his plants: Hugh B. Copenhaver, 7020 Firenze Drive, Phone 297-1865.

A LITTLE OF THIS AND THAT FROM THE GARDEN OF ALAN BLACKBURN

1967 is here, and my cacti started to bud in January. *Ferocactus nobilis* usually blooms in February, but I seldom see a flower, as the frost comes in January and February and leaves the buds frozen.

We have had a very dry winter so far, with warmer weather than normal except for a week of 25° temperature. I lost a few plants including four *Aloe marlothii* seedlings. My 5 foot *Aloe marlothii* was more protected and escaped damage, although the leaves turned a russet color and looked very well against the burnt adobe wall of the house. The dry winter and the cold weather have made the *O. santa-rita* prickly pear a beautiful rich red. *Aloe vera* bloomed through January, and the other Aloes will be ready to bloom by the last of February.

Mammillarias bombycina, *plumosa*, *fragiles*, *compressa*, *spinosissima*, and *microheliopsis*, *Notocactus haselbergii*, *Thelocactus goldii*, *Ancistrocactus scheeri*, and *Strombocactus turbiniformis* all bloomed in January and February. I guess that spring is just around the corner.

Due to such a dry winter, I have watered the plants twice in February and will give them a good soaking with Marvel plant food the first of March. My *Echinopsis* are planted in tree wells and have developed a scale. So, I sprayed them last week with Malathion and detergent soap mixture. This week—and I hosed the plants, and most of the scale washed off. I'll have to keep after the scale in order to keep the plants clean and healthy. This year I am spraying all the beds with Chlordane 80 to keep down the insects. I am told that once it gets soaked into the ground, even the termites are killed. I want to get the grubs that infest my plants. I'll have a report on the results next year.

Right now I am busy mixing soil to repot and reflat all my plants in my lathhouse. This is long overdue, and I hope that all this effort will pay off in better and healthier plants.

FEBRUARY 19-26 was the date for the Cactus and Succulent Show at the Desert Botanical Garden in Papago Park, Phoenix. If you missed it, you should plan to attend next year. Tucson Cactus and Botanical Society had a display of 50 plants on a table with a 1' x 8' planter. "Tucson Cactus Club" was spelled out with 1" *Cephalocereus senilis* seedlings. I exhibited 15 plants in this show and had 41 on the table for the Club exhibit.

Hasta la vista,

Alan Blackburn

THE 1967 BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

Anna K. Sherman, Affiliate Director, New Mexico Cactus & Succulent Society, writes us: "We do hope that Tucson will send a good group to the Convention; also that maybe some of you will come before or stay afterward to visit our gardens and the new garden at our new aerial tramway. We are copying Tucson's Hospitality Room which had great appeal." (Tucson's own Isabelle Meyer originated and organized this feature when the Convention met in Tucson in 1965.)

The Convention is to be held at the Sheraton Western Skies Motel, Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 15th through the 18th. Mrs. Sherman sends the following quotes of further details of possible programs for the Convention:

Monday, May 15th. Registration in forenoon. Luncheon open. Afternoon—President Don B. Skinner will start pre-convention programs with a talk on "Plants and Their Relationships". Dr. Edward F. Castetter, University of New Mexico, follows, talking on "Some Interesting New Mexico Cacti". The opening banquet in the evening will have no special program, just the usual introductions, address of welcome, response, awards and the like.

Tuesday, May 16th. Seven hour tour through Santa Fe and Santo Domingo Pueblo; box lunches furnished by the hotel. After dinner in the evening, election of the King and Queen, or Chief and Squaw; then a showing of color slides of previous conventions taken by members.

Wednesday, May 17th. Collecting trip by private cars to various ranches; box lunches furnished by the hotel. After evening meal, Mr. Alan Mollison of Tucson Cactus and Botanical Society, will present his excellent and unusual time-lapse photography. One other program here is still undecided.

Thursday, May 18th. Delegates' meeting. Then barbecue buffet followed by an undecided program.

The bus trip to Santa Fe will go through three "ghost" towns: Golden, Madrid and Cerrillos (abandoned, or nearly so, coal-mining, gold-mining, and turquoise-mining towns); mountain scenery with some odd rock formations and some cactus—mostly *opuntias*, *imbricata*, *viridiflora*, *polycantha*, but not blooming yet."

CHRISTMAS (ZYGO) CACTUS

Christmas cactus produces many flat-stemmed fleshy branches that serve as leaves. Brilliant pink pendant flowers grow from the edges of the younger part of the plant. Christmas cactus often fails to bloom because of night-time exposure to high temperatures or artificial light.

Pot in humus soil. Keep the soil moist in winter, spring and summer; allow it to dry moderately between waterings in autumn. Grow in full sunlight, cool temperatures, and medium humidity. Beginning September 1st, keep the plant in total darkness, with no artificial light—for at least 12 hours a night. Maintain a high temperature of no more than 70 degrees. During summer, grow the plant in a cool, shaded area. Propagate Christmas cactus from pieces of branches two or more segments long.

— from Home & Garden Bulletin No. 82, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture as published in New Zealand Cactus and Succulent Journal.

EDIBLE PLANTS OF THE DESERT

The Civil Defense Joint Council, Maricopa County and City of Phoenix in 1958 published a pamphlet, *Desert Survival*, full of basic information for anyone traveling in the Sonoran Desert. Its list of edible plants of the desert is revealing.

1. Tomatillo (tomato family) is a shrub with red fruit.
2. Mesquite. Use bean pods when first forming, as you would green beans. When they are dried, take the beans out of pods and cook as beans. Seed pods are 4 to 8 inches long.
3. Simmondsia or goat nut. Is 3 to 7 feet high; has broad, green leaves; is found at altitudes around 2500 feet. Nuts are edible raw or parched, but are too bitter with tannin to be palatable. Dry and boil for coffee.
4. Palo verde tree. Has edible beans found just after the blossoms are gone.
5. Mountain laurel. The seeds are edible. A drink may be made from the seeds.
6. Desert hackberry. Is 3 to 10 feet high and has small edible berries.
7. Tesota or desert ironwood. Is a spiny, bushy tree about 30 feet high. Has lavender blossoms. Seed pods are thick and leathery. Seeds are edible.
8. Mescal or century plant. Flowering stalk is edible. Bake in hot ashes and cut away charred exterior.
9. Catsclaw acacia. Eat the green beans.
10. Ephedra or morman tea. Use for tea. It is leafless and jointed with small cones at joints after it blooms. Turpentine bush and milkweed are poisonous and resemble the ephedra except that they are not jointed and do not have the cones.
11. Barrel cactus. Fruit is edible but not palatable. Fruit is 2 inches in length and is yellow and full of moisture. Has fruit winter and summer. Meat is not palatable — becomes like mucilage after the air hits it, and it may make one sick.
12. Saguaro cactus. Blossoms are followed by fruit which is pulpy and palatable and is obtainable in June and July. Seeds may be ground in metates for meal and made into tortillas.
13. Tree cholla. 3 to 12 feet high. Has purple fruit all winter. Cholla fruit is edible but not palatable.
14. Pincushion cactus. Fruit is called chilitos and looks like small chili peppers. It is edible and palatable, tasting like strawberries. Available usually in June and September.
15. Organ pipe cactus. 3 to 12 feet high. Fruit is fleshy and red. It is edible but very sweet.
16. Hedgehog cactus. The red fruit is palatable and contains much moisture.
17. Prickly pear. Fruit is especially good and contains much moisture. It is available from June up to late fall. If you eat the stem, choose young prickly pear without spines. To cook stems, cut off leaves and cook like string beans.
18. Acorns, dandelions, lambsquarters, nettles (young), miner's lettuce, cattail (root stalks may be boiled or roasted), pinon nuts, pine cone kernel, water cress, bark of aspen or cottonwood or pine, spruce, or tamarack are all edible. Dandelions, lambsquarters, and nettles all should be cooked if possible.

THE LEAVES OF AUTUMN AND YOU

Do autumn leaves get the best of you and your garden? If so, consider Harvey Tate's suggestion to create a compost heap of them, or use them as a mulch around trees and shrubs where you cultivated the soil. Dry leaves used as compost, can decay during the winter. Then, come spring, they will be ready to build up the organic content of the soil in your garden.

CACTUS GARDENS GIVE AUTHENTIC DESERT CHARM

Let the desert be the prevailing spirit in landscaping our gardens when we want to preserve our wonderful desert setting. The important thing is to work WITH the desert. Plantings as well as masonry and wood structures in desert gardens should be done with simplicity and restraint. Also, they should be livable and easy to maintain.

A cactus garden, properly located in the yard, requires minimum care, and provides maximum enjoyment the year around. Gardens may be located in a tiny plot not more than 2 by 2 feet square; or kept exclusively in pots in smaller areas yet; or they may cover ambitious expanses.

Preparing the bed for a cactus garden does require some initial work. These desert plants require a sandy, well drained soil in order to grow properly. Once your garden site has been selected, it is wise to replace the existing soil with a special mixture. Consult your nursery and mix a soil according to the formula they give you. This mixture is suitable for planter boxes. If you convert a corner of the yard, remove all of the soil to a depth of at least 18 inches and replace with sandy soil. One can go to the desert to dig up soil that is now growing cactus. How, after all, could you get better soil for growing cactus than choosing some that is now growing cactus? Such soil can be secured in dry washes without disturbing plants or otherwise tearing up the desert.

Warning! Be reminded that it takes a lot of dirt to fill a hole. For example, a hole 6 feet by 6 feet by 18 inches requires 54 cubic feet of dirt hauled in to fill it. HINT: it is better to start small and expand later.

The New Zealand Cactus & Succulent Journal, Nov. 1966, offers the following ideas for "An Easy Garden": Choose a lot with slopes and hillocks. Plant the agaves, aloes, brilliant ice plants of all kinds, sedums and sempervivums. Put ice plants on the poorest soil or they become too rampant and do not flower well. A few large, handsome rocks in strategic places or artistic positions set it all off. A combination for a sloping garden might include several large agaves, many echeverias, and yuccas with some flat rocks for stepping stones. Opuntias must be grown away from walls. Do not ever place large growing cacti near a house that will need walls painted at some future time.

CACTI AT THE OLD MISSIONS OF CALIFORNIA

Already in the 13th century the Franciscans were familiar with African Euphorbias. By the time of the discovery of America, around the entire coast of Africa a chain of Franciscan Missions had been built among the Stapelias, Gasterias, Aloes and other succulents.

In the western world, cacti were the universal plants that welcomed the early Spanish Franciscans of the 16th century. These missionaries were among every band of the first white explorers who gazed upon the cactus forests of Mexico, Central and South America. A Franciscan, Fra. Marcos de Viza (Niza?) was the first white man to see the giant Saguaro of Arizona. Now in the 20th century, members of his order labour in more than fifty mission chapels among Arizona's Indians, and landscape their desert homes with Saguaro, Coryphanthas, Ferocactus and other types of cacti and succulents.

At the Santa Barbara Mission is an ancient opuntia well over a century old. Its closest in age is a Cereus Peruvianus, planted over 50 years ago, and now nearly 40 feet in height.

A systematic study of the plant life of the region is part of the regular course in botany for students of St. Anthony's Seminary in Santa Barbara. The Padre professor with his students have laid out an extensive succulent garden, and there is a well kept collection of some hundreds of labeled specimens.

—from New Zealand Cactus and Succulent Journal, page 66.

FROM OUR EXCHANGE EDITORS AND OUT-OF-STATE SUBSCRIBERS

Elzine Evans, editor of Houston's KAKTOS KOMMENTS, writes: "We are very pleased to know that you are reading our column, "Say That Again". By the way, Mr. P.G. Nichols of your Society is a friend of ours, and an even older friend of the Greggs of Bellaire, Texas who receive CACTUS CAPITAL CHATTER. We hope to meet you at the convention in Albuquerque, N.M."

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Godwin of Albany, Oregon, subscribed for the 1967 CHATTER and say: "We like your news so very much. We always look forward to reading it. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all in your club. Your Cactus Friends."

Dr. Larry W. Mitich of North Dakota State University sent for a 1967 subscription to the CHATTER, and adds: "I continue to enjoy your fine publication and especially I like the article, "How to Understand What Plant Names Mean", in the 3rd quarterly issue."

Mr. Osamu Ono of Kagawa, Japan is head child psychologist in one of the two clinical centers for mentally disturbed children of his country. In 1965 he spent three months in the United States on a grant, visiting children's clinics. One of his hobbies is cactus culture. He visited cactus clubs around our country during his stay here. The Colorado Cactophiles of Denver entertained him, after which they referred him to the Tucson Cactus & Botanical Society. While here, he was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Meyer who showed him our public and private cactus gardens. Mr. Ono is also well known to two other of our members, Mr. J. F. Brick and Mr. P. G. Nichols.

Mr. and Mrs. Meyer received a 1967 New Year's card from him with the following interesting message:

"Last autumn my first book - the translation of "The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Children" by Dr. Carl R. Rogers (Prof. of the University of Chicago) was published. My new green house (covered by vinyl cloth, 14 x 27 feet) for cactus was completed last summer. Your gifts are growing in it. This writing recalls me into the wonderful days in Tucson with you. Please give my best regard to your kind neighbors. (P.G. Nichols and Joe Brick). Wishing you happiness through this year. Sincerely, Osamu."

Mr. L. E. Newton, formerly of Essex, England, has been a subscriber to Cactus Capital Chatter and plans to continue. Recently he sent in his subscription for 1967 and 1968 to be mailed to him at the University of Science and Technology, KUMASI, GHANA.

Mr. Charles Glass, editor of Cactus and Succulent Journal writes us: "Sure did enjoy the last Convention (held in Tucson) and the exceptional hospitality of the Tucson group!! It sold me on conventions... hope this one's half as good!"

Mr. R. L. Russell, vice president of the Cactus & Succulent Society of New Zealand, tells us that overseas journals received by his society, including our CHATTER of course, truly travel around there. They go first from Mr. Russell to the editor of the New Zealand Cactus & Succulent Journal. Then to the executive committee of the Society, and are ultimately distributed to their members who meet at 21 branches scattered throughout the country. Mr. Russell wishes all of us "the best for 1967".

OVERSEAS PEN FRIENDS WANTED

1. Mr. N.M. Stow, 53 Horotane Valley, Heathcote, Christchurch, New Zealand. He is a stone fruit grower interested in cactus; in 35 mm. colour photography; in rocks and minerals.
2. Mr. Garry Barker, 35 Euston St., Riccarton, Christchurch, New Zealand. His main interest is cactus, fishing and rocks.