

The PEOPLE, PLACES AND PLANTS of the PCL OF WATERLILY NAMES

When I undertook the job of co-Registration Officer (co- with my friend Rich Sacher) for IWGS, I had no idea what it would involve. Our goal was to establish a Registry for waterlilies. At first glance it looked like I needed to round up existing waterlily names, design a registration form, set up a registry database, zip, zip, done.

Little did I know that just the work on the PCL (Provisional Check List of *Nymphaea* Epithets) would grow to an astounding proportion. This list is required and must be approved before we can open registration. Today it has nearly 1200 existing waterlily names with 30 possible fields of information about each one, none of them descriptive. The technical aspects are for another time and place. Suffice it to say I learned more about botanical nomenclature than I ever dreamed existed.

Such a project required a worldwide effort and would have been almost impossible without the internet and E-mail. Over the year that I worked on the PCL, information came

from surprising and interesting places. In extensive correspondence with some contributors, I became really interested in learning something about the people themselves. If I were completely truthful, I've probably used writing this article as an excuse to satisfy my own curiosity!

As we all do, I began to picture the people at the other end of cyberspace. In my mind, John Wiersema was relatively ancient, leonine, probably crotchety, writing to me from a tiny Washington office stacked to the roof with dusty books on the computer equivalent of an old Royal typewriter. Was I ever wrong!

From the countryside in Australia, Charlie Northcroft's stories evoked a sense of almost other-worldly charm. Chris Farmer conveyed



Co-registration officer Rich Sacher and partner, Bill Dailey, own American Aquatic Gardens in New Orleans.



"It's Betsy's magic again!" Betsy Sakata is known for her unstinting work in the quest for knowledge of aquatic plants. Photo by Rich Sacher and Bill Dailey

the picture of a dedicated, determined Brit in oh-so-laid-back France, loving every minute of his life. Suwanna and Rainer Gaide from Thailand seemed the perfect meld of cultures. I am extremely grateful to these people for their enormous contributions to the PCL, and I am equally grateful for the life they have breathed into it.

This account would not be complete without mentioning the utterly miraculous and charmingly manipulative Betsy Sakata. She seduced Rich and me into undertaking this project, cajoled John into being on the committee, orchestrated the resurrection of the IWGS E-mail discussion list that connected me with Suwanna, Rainer and Charlie, and lured Chris into the web. When glittering

gems of information suddenly appeared on my E-mail screen, I could only say, "It's Betsy's magic again!"

Part of the fascination of these and all contributors to the PCL is the diversity of their lives — past, present and future. It took so many of us to accomplish this seemingly impossible goal, from hobbyists to scientists, from Europe to Asia, each unique and invaluable. We did it!

AUSTRALIA

Charlie Northcroft

As work progressed on the PCL, I put out calls for help to the iwgslist@iwgs.org. One who responded was Charlie Northcroft, who had catalog information from Australian hybridizer Johan Harder of Arcadia Water Gardens in New South Wales. The names were new to me and I asked lots of questions. Before long Charlie became really interested in the project and went to visit the Harders to glean more information for the PCL.

Charlie became the invaluable link with several Australian hybridizers and, while on holiday in New Zealand, searched for waterlily growers there and contacted them for information. Things that piqued my curiosity were that Charlie claimed to be a beginning level hobbyist grower, though his level of interest indicated far more, and his E-mail address was St. Joseph's House of Prayer.

> Will you tell me a little about yourself? How you came to be at St. Joseph's? What your life is like? How you became interested in waterlilies?

Charlie wrote:

St Joseph's House of Prayer is a community of Christians from various denominations, who provide a place of prayer and hospitality for church groups, families or individuals, in a huge old former orphanage that is situated on 50 acres of farmland on the northern edge of Goulburn in New South Wales. The community depends on donations from the people who make use of the facilities, in order to maintain

the place and to support ourselves. Although ecumenical in outlook and ministry, the Community is under the authority of the Catholic Church, and the Archbishop of Canberra Goulburn, Francis Carroll, takes a personal interest in our life and work.

We may be occupied at different tasks around house or property, but come together for prayer three times a day in our little chapel, and for lunch and dinner. Everyone takes turns doing the cooking which makes for variety, both in the type of food cooked, and the standard of the cooking! In the past it was rumoured that some people determined what day they were going to have off on the basis of



Australian hybridizer, John Harder



Ruth Northcroft with her mother, circa 1915.

who was cooking that night! Of course this is no longer true, if in fact it ever was! During the summer months we often decorate the dining tables with bowls of floating waterlilies which are much admired by our visitors, who also enjoy walking down to the river and viewing them in their natural setting.

I have been involved with Christian communities since 1976 and first came to St Joseph's in 1979 for a week long gathering of different communities. Subsequently I visited during holidays and on one of these visits was asked if I would consider joining the community and running the farming side of things here. I didn't know much about farming but knew more than those who were here at the time so I got the job and joined the community in 1982.

I have also been responsible for setting up our prayer ministry on the Internet and a weath-

er information site for farmers. The ideas for both came through prayer and, in the case of the weather site, at a time when we didn't even have a computer that was able to access the Internet! Being on a farm ourselves we often prayed for farmers, particularly in times of drought. In 1997 when yet another drought began and the rural suicides were increasing, God opened up the way for me to find information that was helpful to farmers, provided a new computer, and launched us into cyberspace! But that story would need another article! (Visit us at <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~sjhop>)

I became involved with waterlilies through my mother's love for them. She did not know why she loved waterlilies so much until she was about 40 years old and found a photograph amongst her father's things. It was of her mother showing her waterlilies at a very young age.

She had died when Ruth was four, but they would have often visited this special spot, and these memories of being taken down to see the waterlilies in the pond on the family farm in South Westland New Zealand had been nurtured in the subconscious and were to have wider ramifications.

I well remember being embarrassed as a young boy seeing my mother picking waterlily flowers from public ponds and botanical gardens when she thought nobody was watching. She recently informed me that my sister and I had brought her some that we had got from somewhere once, too. Funny, I don't remember doing that!!!!!!! My mother is an artist and she has always signed her signature including a little drawing of a waterlily.

She came over here to the St Joseph's House of Prayer for her eightieth birthday and stayed for six weeks. One day she was taken out for the afternoon by some of the other members of the community, including David Woods. They visited friends who lived by the river and had waterlilies planted there, the friends having asked if St Joseph's would like some of them.

David relates:

"We set off on the adventure to find the water lilies, arrived at the property and proceeded to the river. The waterlilies were at a place where cattle came regularly to drink, so the edge of the water was a black and oozy mud.

"We sat on rocks at the water's edge, pondering the beauty of the view. Ruth was waxing eloquent, using all the superlatives she could summon to describe the picturesque scene. As



Ruth Northcroft and PCL contributor, Charlie Northcroft.

we were being transported by her colourful description, silently contemplating the beauty of the scene, this 80-year-old grandmother drew herself up to her diminutive 5 feet, and strode into the water, oblivious to the black ooze, lunging at the lily closest to her. Again and again she lunged, down to the roots! She wanted the lot.

"Taken totally by surprise, I leapt from my meditation and plunged in after her, fearing she would be swallowed up by the black and muddy ooze while consumed by a compulsive water lily fever. I reached out and grabbed her arm, while she lunged again and again. I held her around the waist and then eased myself alongside and asked if I could help her to pull them out. With redirected passion Ruth busied herself in giving orders, 'This one, and make sure you get the roots.'

"It was a proud moment when we came up from the water, arm in arm, Ruth carrying the prize. This 'Marliacea Albida' was to be the first of the House of Prayer's collection of waterlilies."

We planted them in our dam, but it was too

cloudy, and when I saw that they weren't doing very well, I took one of the roots and planted it in the river. That one thrived and a year later we obtained some roots of 'Sulphurea Grandiflora' which we added as well. Then the 1997 drought hit. The river receded until the waterlilies were drying out and the sheep were running over the top of them. I took advantage of the low water level to subdivide the roots and plant them out into deeper water, and when the rains came, we had an abundance of these two varieties.

Since then, I have obtained other varieties and colours for use as table decorations. The spot where they are on the river is a lovely prayerful or reflective spot for our ourselves and our visitors.

I looked up "waterlilies" on the Internet one day last year, discovered the IWGS site, and found that I could subscribe to their E-mail discussion list. It was through that list that I learned of your request for information regarding new hybrids. It has been a unique international effort which I have been proud to be a part of.



Ruth Northcroft reaches for the "prize", 'Marliacea Albida', held by David Woods.

FRANCE

Chris Farmer

It was apparent early on that one of the most difficult aspects of the PCL would be sorting out the names of early hybrids where the originators were no longer alive to ask questions. I was entirely dependent on the literature, much of which was not available to me directly. I had to rely on those who had that direct access and, in much of this, Chris Farmer of Latour-Marliac became my savior, researching old catalogues, clarifying French form and punctuation, and brainstorming.

The hybrids of Latour-Marliac are legendary and timeless, part of the rich history that has pervaded this project. Much of the reward, though I didn't think so much of it in the beginning, has been the transportation to the turn of the last century and before when Latour-Marliac worked his magic and Conard wrote about it. The pages I read became an incredible Impressionist's painting as Chris and I exchanged E-mail.

> *Tell me what the place is like! It must be gorgeous and just oozing with history.*

Chris wrote:

To describe the place once you've been here every day for 5 years I find almost impossible. It changes every month, almost every week with the flowering seasons. Try to imagine a solid hectare (two and a half acres) of concrete pools obviously dating back to the first quarter of the last century. There are 80 of them and there is not more than four feet of dry land between



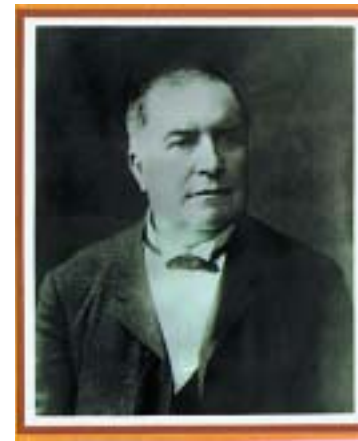
"Camera shy" Chris Farmer.

them. They are almost all planted with lilies or lotus — the colours of the landscape change continually.

To one side there is a more traditional garden which descends to a large artificial lake and then climbs up again to an English garden with lots of shrubs growing like mad. We rise once more on to a small artificial hill with a wooden gazebo which affords a view of the entire site.

Apart from the lilies, the most imposing plants are the lotus, of course, dotted around in barrels and containers and a whole string of pools given over to them. Water canna, which grow up to 7-8 feet in height, flower throughout the season and the traditional weeping willows are becoming almost uncontrollable. There are extensive and ancient plantations of medium size bamboo, *Phyllostachis bambusoides* et al, achieving 8-10 metres in height.

There are only two permanent employees, me and my French girlfriend, Karine. Though technically head gardener, my job description could go on forever. I look after and maintain the nursery and the gardens. Karine deals with most of the PR, ads, bedding plants, guided tours, souvenir shop, etc. We split the



Joseph Bory Latour-Marliac, circa 1900.

work in two and we each carry our load. We enjoy the summers, the plants that behave and flower, and going out for a beer after a hard day's work.

I was born in the North-West of England. My father is a traffic policeman and my mother is a company secretary. I was good at school but not interested in the empirical subjects in which I was told that I was good. I left school at 16 to do vocational courses that related to my interests in



The Latour-Marliac Garden.

music and films. By the age of 20 I left home and was awaited at North London University to study for a degree in film studies.

I heard that Stapeley was looking for someone who spoke French to do a season at their newly acquired nursery in the South of France. I first worked here at Latour-Marliac in 1993 and have since forgotten all about universities and film studies. I learnt French at school (I wasn't that good, but I didn't tell anyone that). The majority of the French I use now I learnt during the first one or two seasons here just listening and taking advantage of those people around who were patient enough to help.

I'm now fairly settled here and have picked up all I know "on the job." Of course, I had one

of the best mentors and motivators in Ray Davies, who threatened and cajoled me into being hard-working and caring a great deal about what I do.

I suppose in the end I always wanted to be good at something. I just didn't know what. Now I do. My mission in life is look after Latour-Marliac's name and reputation.

THAILAND

Rainer & Suwanna Gaide

Over the last several years, some of the most beautiful new waterlilies introduced in the United States have been from Thailand, brought here by Rich Sacher, Bill Dailey and Betsy Sakata, among others. The originator of some of these, and the leading authority on waterlilies in Thailand, is Dr. Slearmarp Wasuwat. I was unable to reach Dr. Wasuwat directly for some time to ask questions and, though Betsy Sakata had provided me with his books, I couldn't read Thai!

Answering one of my many pleas for help with the PCL via iwgslist were Rainer and Suwanna Gaide, growers and exporters of waterlilies in Thailand. They began by offering to help with translation, but I plied them with many more questions. They responded by searching, researching, contacting and following up. Because of "reminders" made by the Gaides and Betsy, Dr. Wasuwat did send me his information directly, an invaluable contribution to the PCL.

I became very interested in this husband and wife who were helping so much and asked them about themselves. In the beginning, Rainer talked about the business. When I asked for a bit of "romance," this beautiful story emerged.

Rainer wrote:

Suwanna is Thai and I'm German. In 1975 I entered uni-



Dr. Slearmarp Wasuwat with his lilies

versity in Berlin to study aerospace technology. It was always my childhood dream to follow in the footsteps of Werner von Braun — and I still follow every space adventure very closely. This subject was very tough, so I decided after 3 years to change to computer science. Also in '75 I married a Chinese lady from Malaysia whom I'd met in England. But in '82 this marriage broke up, in large part due to the fact that many Germans are not very foreigner friendly and my ex-wife was very sensitive in this regard.

She went back to Malaysia and I followed, after completing my BSc later the same year and in the hope of patching up (we were not divorced yet). Her family would not agree to let us continue (family consent is a very important matter in Asian cultures). I then went to



Dr. Slearmarp Wasuwat, Rainer, Suwanna, and Surete Gaide.

Thailand with less than US\$100 in my pocket, where I knew some people from contacts in Germany. Since I had given up everything in Germany, I was not inclined to go back there. I've not been back since.

For a foreigner, it is very difficult to find employment here in Thailand. Here it is the exact opposite as Germany; the Thai people are very open-minded, no anti-foreigner sentiment whatsoever, but the laws and regulations are very much designed to keep foreigners out of Thailand.

While searching for a job in Thailand, I was offered a position as System Analyst in Saudi Arabia, which I took. After completing my one-year contract there, I finally got a job as computer programmer at a small computer shop in Bangkok. This is where I met Suwanna, who was just out of university with a BSc in Statistics. She worked there as a programmer and computer teacher. The shop sold an Apple clone to an American owned company, which was exporting ornamental plants to the Middle East. The owner hired Suwanna and me to run his computer.

In 1986 this company folded, and we took over the business of exporting plants. In 1989 a Dutch customer approached us about available waterlilies. Our first shipment was a disaster (most lilies rotted along the way),

but this customer obviously saw us as a good potential source. He visited us (and still is doing so once every year) and introduced us to the commercially viable way of growing waterlilies for export. Now we are growing only hardy type lilies and our production quantities still do not meet demand. We also grow some marginal plants for export.

Though Suwanna and I met in '84, it was not until 1993 that we got married because my divorce from my first wife took a very long time, involving embassies of three countries, and also our finances did not look very good. Here in Thailand it is socially not acceptable to live together before marriage - so it was a really long wait.

The most heart-warming thing I experienced here about the kindness of the Thai people came from Suwanna's parents. Though being aware of our intention to marry one day, there was no guarantee that we would, yet they provided us in '86 with substantial start-up funds



'Fabiola' in the Gaide's main growing area, formerly rice fields.



Suwanna Gaide's "ICU" near their home.

for our own company even though they themselves barely had enough for a decent living. This made me even more determined to make sure our company succeeded — it did and now everybody is happy, though Suwanna's mother could not enjoy much of it since she passed away, too early at the age of 60, two years ago.

Suwanna says she would not know what to write about herself. She had a much less active past before we met. She was living with her parents and an older sister in a small teak wood house which in '84, when we met, still had no running water (in Bangkok!) and got electricity only a few years before that. Suwanna's father was at that time driving his own taxi and her mother was working at the National Museum of Thailand. Suwanna started work at the computer shop where we met straight out of University, only 3 months before I showed up. Now we have a son who will soon be six but who does not show much interest in plants, yet he does like to help in our nursery sometimes. For him, robots and computers are much more important.

Suwanna handles all matters about the waterlilies and the other ornamental plants. I only run the company, take care of packing the

plants for export, communication, etc. Suwanna's "ICU", where she plants all the very small offspring, is close to our home (about 600 meters) and easy to look after. Our ponds are located about 200km north of Bangkok, and Suwanna can spend only every other weekend there.

Our ponds are located "in the middle of nowhere." The area was previously used as rice fields. Because we ran out of space in our ponds, we had to utilize irrigation ditches in fruit orchards, located next to our ponds and owned by relatives, to grow waterlilies. These ditches have a depth of over 150cm (over 5ft) and only certain waterlilies will grow there well. In general, the hardy types grow quite well here, but some don't flower as much as they would in cooler climes. This is no problem for us since our aim is fast reproduction for export. Highest in demand are 'Firecrest', 'Fabiola', *tetragona* and Kenya Yellow (a local name, which is probably 'Moorei').

During the time of establishing our waterlily business, Dr. Wasuwat and other knowledgeable people here in Thailand have been very helpful with advice about growing waterlilies and how to identify the different varieties. If we have helped with the PCL, it is our way of thanking them.

UNITED STATES

Dr. John Wiersema

Another problem with building the PCL was that I had no example to go by. I was sent Registers and Registration Forms of other genera but really had no clue what information should be included in the PCL. I received generous guidance from Dr. Alan Leslie and Piers Trehane of the ISHS (International Society for Horticultural Science), the organization which governs this work, but it was occasional and sporadic.

I believe that these gentlemen realized I was a lay person (but willing!) and added to the job description gradually. It's a good thing that it was gradual, because I would have been totally intimidated by the requirements if presented at the outset. I was told early that I was not required to include information about *Nymphaea* species. As the cultivar list took shape, it was "suggested" that species information be included in order to be sure that ALL names had been researched in search of cultivar names.

Ahhggg! How was I to do this? "Trawl" the databases was the humorously offhand answer. I trawled databases until I was

blue, everything I could find on the Web, including Missouri Botanical Garden's W3Tropicos, Harvard's Gray Card Index and, most importantly, GRIN. It's author, Dr. John Wiersema, was on our committee, thanks to Betsy.

The list of names with which we began was compiled by Philip Swindells in 1988 and, though it was only names, incomplete and out of date, it was a start. When I sent it out, I received extensive notes from John about species names on that list, duly entered them in the database and didn't really appreciate their value. When suddenly confronted with hundreds of names found trawling, John became my new best friend.

John is one of the leading taxonomists in the world, has a special interest in waterlilies and has done an astounding amount of work in aid of this PCL. I am embarrassed to look back at the dumb questions I asked him before I finally woke up to just how important he and GRIN



John collecting in Guyana.

are to the plant world. He kept telling me that the currently accepted species names were all in his database. Simple. Don't complicate it.

Once that penetrated, I was still stuck with all these "other" names that I had to put somewhere. John, within about 48 hours, researched each and every one of them, put them in the GRIN database (available on line) with their currently accepted synonyms, sent them to me and added notes for clarification as needed. WOW! More questions arose and John's turn-around time for answers got shorter (if you can imagine that from this incredibly busy man), sometimes firing back within hours. The result is that our PCL has absolutely up-to-date chapter-and-verse information on *Nymphaea* species names from the world's leading authority in the field.

Naturally once the dust settled, I had to ask > *May I include you in the article for Pond & Garden? Will you tell me about yourself?*

John wrote:

Currently, I am a botanist in the Systematic Botany and Mycology Laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center in Maryland. My primary responsibilities involve providing taxonomic and nomenclatural expertise to the National Plant Germplasm System through its Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN). I have worked in this capacity since 1984 (initially as a research associate of the University of Maryland), acquiring considerable experience and data on the nomenclature of economic plants.

Much of my first twenty-four years of life was spent in western

Michigan, growing up, as the fourth of eight children, in a semi-rural environment near Muskegon and later attending Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. With a B.S. in Psychology and Sociology completed in 1974, I moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama to work in a state mental-retardation institution.* ** Later I attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, completing both an M.S. and a Ph.D. in biology by 1984 under the supervision of Dr. Robert R. Haynes, an aquatic plant taxonomist. My graduate studies focused on the systematics of aquatic vascular plants, particularly those of the water-lilies and their relatives.

> *John, how in the world did you get from here* to there**?*

Here is your missing link: Already confronting the realization of future psychological burnout, I had begun undergraduate work in biology, although never having taken a botany course, in the last two years in Michigan and finished with an undeclared biology minor involving 20 semester hours.

Having exhausted my undergraduate schooling options (i.e., funds), I was then compelled to

enter the work force with the only marketable major I had completed, psychology. Some two years later, with the knowledge gained from my biology coursework and independent study, I was able to score sufficiently well in biology on the GRE exam to achieve conditional admission to a graduate biology program at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, where I then resided. A few more undergraduate courses were required in graduate school to remedy deficiencies, but within a year these were completed and I was on my way to a botany career.

Childhood had instilled in me an appreciation for the outdoors, and some 50,000 miles of travel around North America during my undergraduate years ignited a love of adventure, so in graduate school with my first exposure to taxonomic botany I was hooked on botanical fieldwork. A Master's study of water-lilies throughout Alabama focused my attention on the genus *Nymphaea*, which, not having been studied much since Conard's monograph in 1905, was an excellent subject for new discoveries. I therefore began, as a doctoral project, the study of the little-known tropical American subgenus *Hydrocallis*. Five new species were brought to light during this study, with fieldwork taking me to Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador, Brazil, and Argentina and visits to several European herbaria as well to study prior collections.

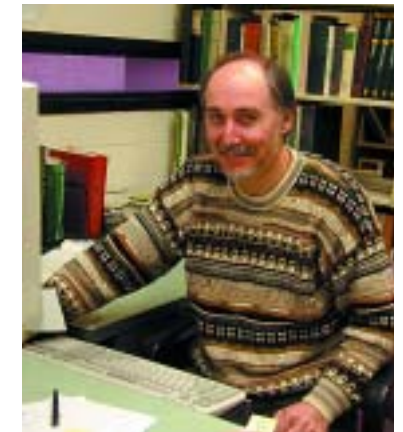
It was during this time that I began cultivating species returned from field expeditions. This provided material for a variety of studies such as scanning electron microscopy, phytochemistry, chromosome number, reproductive biology, numerical taxonomy, and morphology. Because the observation of nocturnal flowering responses in *Hydrocallis* was far more convenient if they were nearby, I grew them in 25 backyard washtubs.

With my move to Maryland in 1984, most of these earlier cultures soon perished due to inad-

equate maintenance facilities. The USDA position brought a change from a field- or laboratory-oriented botanist s t u d y i n g water-lilies to a literature- or database-ori-

entation focusing on agricultural plants. While my interest in water-lilies necessarily took a backseat to this other activity, it has survived due to occasional field expeditions, study of species in cultivation, and periodic contributions to water-lily taxonomy, such as preparation of the treatment for the Flora of North America. Most species have now been restored to cultivation from subsequent expeditions or exchanges with botanical colleagues. About 35 species of the ca. 45 known species are now in cultivation, representing some 50 wild collections.

Water-lilies, being among the oldest of flowering plants and nearly worldwide in their distribution, have been and will continue to be a subject of fascination. I am encouraged by the number of researchers currently interested in *Nymphaea*. My own long-term ambition is the preparation of a new taxonomic monograph on the genus, which should keep me busy for years to come. Field study of *Nymphaea* is an ever-consuming pastime, for it seems that no matter where one goes, a species is there to be studied and appreciated. The aesthetic appeal of water-lilies alone would be sufficient to sustain my interest in the absence of any scientific curiosity. For in my view, nothing can compare, in its sheer beauty and serenity, to a pristine natural population of water-lilies.



Dr. John Wiersema at his "ancient Royal typewriter".



John collecting in Guyana 2.

UNITED STATES

Me

I really wanted a fifth “victim” for this article and decided that, since I have been so blatant in my curiosity about the others, it would only be fair to reciprocate. When it came to the PCL, my E-mail voice was probably all business, only part of who I am.

I’m a native Floridian, born and raised in the Orlando area, with water an integral part of my life. Though the inland lakes are fabulous, the Atlantic Ocean in all its moods has been my Siren. My husband Ben, too, is a native in all but three years of life and is as drawn to this Cocoa Beach of ours as I am.

Some years ago I built a group of small ponds which utilized the overflow of a well and my mother gave me a pot of waterlilies from, of all people, Bill Frase. I thought they were pretty, but it took a trip to Longwood Gardens to hook me. I should mention that the trip wasn’t plant related but horse related. I train dressage horses, especially my own Lipizzan stallions, in this Olympic sport/art.

Though interested in plants as a child, the idea of creating the garden we have now didn’t really occur to me until Ben and I were married 10 years ago. He is a Family

(sometimes Emergency) Physician, today just keeping his hand in with friends and family. A seemingly unlikely couple, the “Paradise” we have created is even more unlikely! We are hobbyists gone mad.

Ponds are everywhere. We dig a hole to get dirt to fill waterlily pots; it eventually becomes a pond, which needs more dirt for the pots of waterlilies. The ponds have to have decoration around them — all sorts of plants, exotic tropicals, natives, orchids. The passion has really become full-blown with *Victoria*.

We both also have a passion for learning. Though many of Ben’s interests have been within medicine, mine have been widely divergent, from journalism and photography to art galleries to real estate development to gourmet cooking and wine to horses and gardening. Each area of interest has been very rewarding, and I have a thing about giving back in the areas that are so good to me. As a result I have been involved with local, national, and international



Kit Knotts, leaning on a favorite statue of Pegasus, her other passion being horses!

organizations, undertaking very interesting projects for them.

These have included writing for various national publications in many fields, organizing national and international meetings, art shows, horse shows, including an Olympic Selection Trial, writing the dressage tests performed by riders throughout the US, setting up and keeping records of these activities and more. When our dear con-artist Betsy broached the possibility of undertaking the Registry project for the IWGS, I said “Piece of cake!” HA! Think again!

Let’s come back to the fact that we are hobbyists! We have learned a lot as we’ve developed the garden, but that was no preparation for the intricacy of the PCL. We have a basic botany text in our library now and of course “The Code.” The International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants is always at hand, as well as the dictionary needed to read it.

The work itself, the challenge of finding all the missing pieces of the puzzle, was almost addictive. Keeping up with John when he was on a roll or Walter Pagels or Piers Trehane when they were sending information as fast as I could enter it in the

database was almost obsessive. Now, the PCL is as finished as it ever will be, it’s waterlily season, and the garden beckons.✿

Pond & Garden congratulates Kit and all who helped with developing the monumental PCL of Waterlily Names. Thank you for sharing your passion and knowledge with us!



“A little piece of Paradise, our garden,” says Kit of her and Ben’s oceanside gardens.