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Delegate's Report of Annual Ontario Horticultural Meeting

When Mrs. Harry Marchington gave her report to Georgetown Horticultural Society of her visit as one of the delegates to the Ontario convention, it was so thorough and interesting that members thought it should be shared with those who were not in attendance at the meeting. The report, in its entirety, follows:

Mr. Chairman and fellow gardeners:

I want first to thank you for making it possible for Mrs. Norton and me to have two most enjoyable days at the convention in Hamilton. As you know, a lot of ground is covered in a day, and I can only give you the highlights as I saw them.

The invocation appropriate to the occasion, was given by the Reverend John Witzel of Mount Hamilton, and was followed by the introduction of officers and directors.

The president, Dr. Bryce McKendrick of Toronto, called the convention a sort of refresher course, where you met and exchanged ideas with other practical gardeners. Great progress has been made in Horticulture in the last 25 years, with a great deal of help being given by the Ontario Dept. of Agriculture and the OAC and he mentioned especially Dr. Hilton, and Mr. James Taylor of the OAC's Horticultural Dept. However, while the population of Ontario has increased tremendously, the membership of the Horticultural Society has not, and he issued a challenge to the association to enrol more members, and to try to reach the 40,000 mark for 1958, which means an increase of only 20 new members from each society. He hoped a solution would be found and mentioned the willingness of the press and radio to give publicity, if the activities were imaginative enough to be of interest to the public.

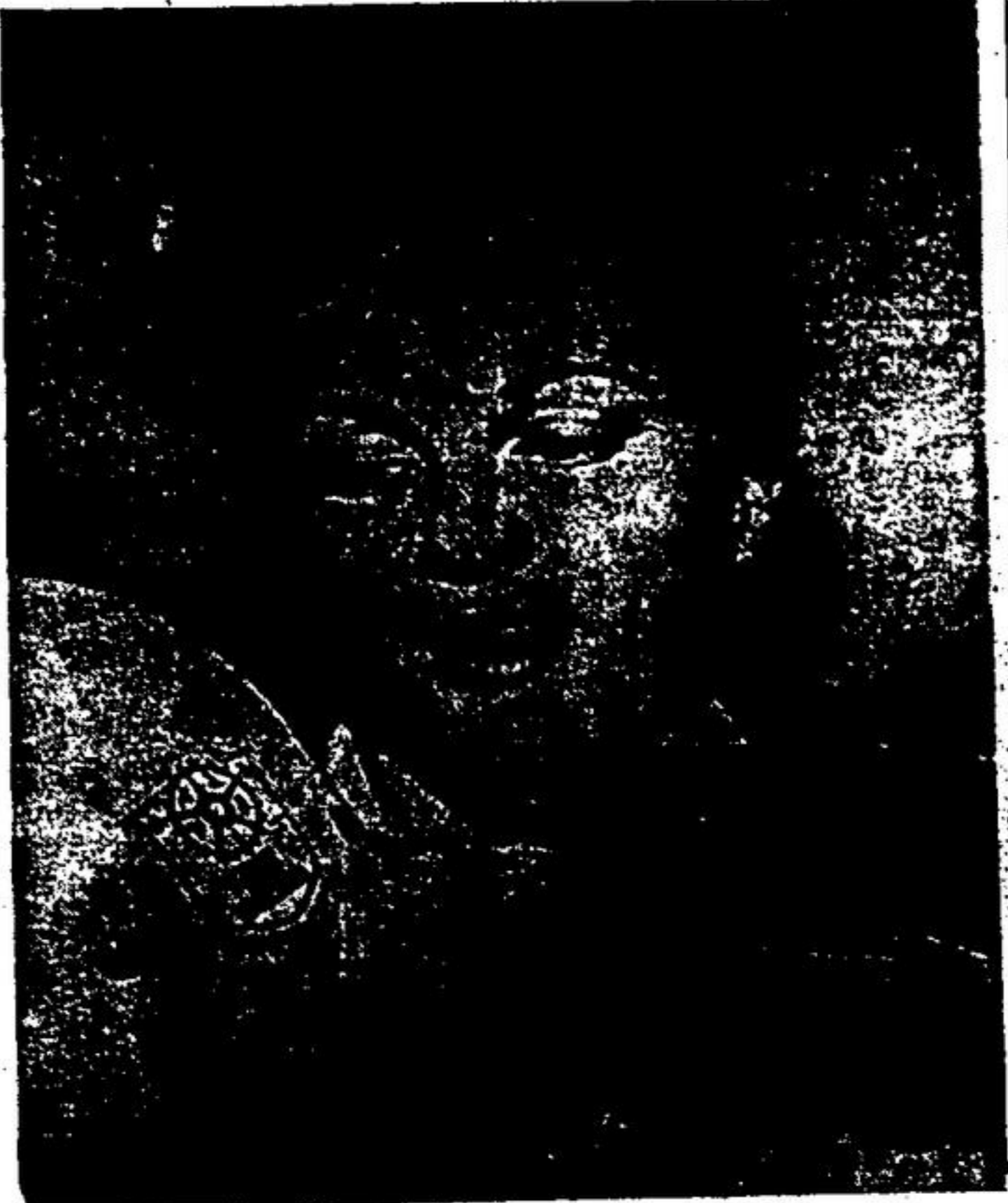
The treasurer in giving his report also stressed the need for new members. The total net worth at the end of 1957 was \$2,414.82.

Mr. John P. Budd, of the Toronto Parks and Recreation Department then spoke on 'House Plants'. House plants, he said, should blend in with your house and furnishings. They should give it colour and interest and add a spark

of life to your house. The large leaved plants such as the rubber plant, dieffenbachia, croton, etc., look well in contemporary homes, while period furniture calls for finer leaved flowering plants. He gave general directions for soil, lighting, watering, etc. as he said, no plant is better than its soil.

The next speaker was Mr. E. I. Wood, landscape architect, Federal District Commission, Ottawa, who illustrated his talk with many beautiful slides. Up until the war, park landscaping at Ottawa, as elsewhere, consisted of a great many small beds dotted here and there, of foliage and such like small plants, and it kept 15 greenhouses, and a great many men busy growing them.

The designs were good, according to the times, and the ideas for them had been brought over by well trained old country gardeners. But they belonged to the day of ornate furniture and fancy brick a brace, the pre-war era when people just stayed home; or walked in the parks. After the war there were great changes — men had shorter work hours, more money and cars, and these displays were 20 years behind the times. During the war the greenhouses were unused, and were in disrepair, and money was scarce — so Mr. Wood came up with some new ideas. 12 of the 15 greenhouses were demolished, they dispensed with the small beds and their foliage plants, and planted spring-flowering bulbs in large beds or drifts, followed by rugosa and floribunda roses, lilacs and rhododendrons and boxes for filling in, between seasons, followed by the easy grown annuals, which last till frost. Tried and true single annuals were used, picked for their brightness and pureness of colour, and most beds contained just one colour. Some beds were heaped up in the centre to show them off to advantage, and in parkways and driveway splashes of colour were used as people now travelled in cars and got a different view at the speed with which they now passed. Pure design, colour dominance, brilliance of colour and large numbers, with of course good background, all serve to give tourists to our capital a brilliant display all during the growing season.



DELEGATES ATTENDING THE 1958 safety conference of the Industrial Accident Prevention Associations were more than 30 members of the "Turtle Club." They are industrial workers who have saved their lives or escaped serious injury by wearing "hard hats" on the job. Safety conference was held in the Queen Elizabeth Building, Toronto, last month. Here pretty Mabel Webber shows a life-saving chapeau to a none-too-happy snapping turtle.

A panel consisting of Sandy Best, Georgetown, O. A. Kummer of Preston, Jas. Taylor of the OAC and the Rev. Mr. Siebert of Elmira, the "glad" man, then answered questions on lilies, bulbs and tubers before we adjourned for lunch. Mr. Best gave the dates, July 18th and 19th for the International Lily show to be held this year at Hart House, Toronto. He suggested that bus loads should attend if possible, the hours for Friday the 17th being 2.30 p.m. to 10 p.m., and on Saturday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The afternoon session started at 2 and a report on awards and presentations was given by the secretary. I might say here that the birdhouses and posters were on display, as was a good array of house plants by Mr. Budd of the Toronto parks department. The winning slides were put on the screen later.

Mr. Lashley, the superintendent, then gave his report on the achievements of the Association, which is now in its 105th year. There are 210 societies in Ontario with a membership of 36,935. Nine new societies were organized in 1957 — the largest society is at Guelph where they have 1325 members. Mr. Lashley reported that last year 140 societies did various forms of public planting. '55 held flower shows, while 52 featured garden competitions.

He made reference to the annual grant from the Ontario government having been increased to \$30,000 which was divided among the societies. He also said that a number of societies had not sent in their reports, and until they did the money could not be distributed to the ones that did, so urged that that be done. He said too that Mr. Clark, the secretary had pictures of last year's trip to England and the continent and they were available to societies.

Dr. R. J. Hilton, head of the Horticultural Dept. of the OAC, in speaking on Plant Hardiness and Gardening in the north, said that Horticulture was pure romance, that the apple had figured in the first romance, but that in his opinion, the whole thing revolved around a green pear. He went on to discuss, rather technically, plant hardiness, what it is, why it is, and how it may affect each of us. The term "hardiness" is often taken to apply to any plant that is thriving out of its usual environment, but Canadians usually associate the term with the limiting growth factor of temperature. Thus a 'half hardy plant' at Guelph will be a 'tender plant' at Winnipeg. The factor of heredity influences our recognition of the conditions under which one plant is hardy and another not — many kinds of plants are particularly adapted to short growing seasons and low temperatures — one that in his opinion, is low growing as to take fullest advantage of very light snow cover — or another may mature its wood or winter buds very early, and so have fullest opportunity to harden off for the winter. Another is shade loving, therefore protected by forest or bush cover, and so on. Also, garden plants are influenced by the direct factors of environment. Hardening off is essentially done in nature by the combination of bright autumn sunlight — (ample, carbohydrate manufacture); reduced moisture supply (common in mid-autumn) and sharply reduced night temperatures — (reduced rate of respiration and consequently less utilization of carbohydrates and more storage of these sugars and starches. In the plant, the effect of hardening off is seen in tissues with cells turgid, not with "free" water and sugars in thin solution, but with stored food not only essential for rapid growth next spring but also enables the plant to retain water in "bound" form, and in this condi-

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