

# JOURNAL

FRIENDS OF THE 'SHAMROCK' HYDRANGEA COLLECTION

Journal n° 35 - Year 2024



[www.shamrock-varengeville.com](http://www.shamrock-varengeville.com)



*Anne Nicolle - September 2023*

## Letter from the President

**Bryan Woy**

As President of your Association, I have great pleasure in celebrating with you the 30th anniversary of its foundation.

This occasion will be marked by the publication of the book "The Hydrangea" by our friend Maurice Foster, who has devoted several pages to us in recognition of the work carried out within the Shamrock collection over all these years. In particular, Corinne's publications in several languages,

which have greatly advanced knowledge of the Hydrangea genus, and the publication every 4 years in 4 languages of our "International Index of Cultivar Names" are cited today by many authors around the world, as are our annual Journals, first in paper form and now digitised, in two languages and nearly 50 pages, which can be accessed on our new website.

In this issue 35 of our Journal, and the previous

issue, we present a body of knowledge on Saxon hybrids of the species *H. macrophylla*, thanks to the work of Éliane Le Bret, Mathias Riedel, Katrin Meinl and André Diéval.

We are also pleased to present the breeding work of our friend Marie-France Doll at Forêt-Fouessant over approximately the same period of time. The conservation of plants in the collection, now estimated at around 2,000 different cultivars and species collected in the wild, is being organised to cope with future climate change.

Our Association's official recognition by GEVES, the French Ministry of Agriculture's Variety and Seed Study and Control Group, as a "collection manager" (ornamental plants) within the network of the CCVS (the French Conservatory of Specialised Plant Collections), has given us formal status confirming our agricultural activity within the framework of a renewable lease, signed with our friends from the Hugot family, owners of the renowned Manoir d'Ango next door.

As part of our efforts to preserve plant biodiversity, we subscribe to the PVV Manifesto (Patrimoine

Végétal Vivant - Living Plant Heritage) prepared by the CCVS in association with other European associations pursuing the same goal. You too can participate by visiting the CCVS website:

<https://www.ccvv-france.org>

What remains to do now is to look to the future with your Committee and all the members of the team of volunteers who have embarked on this adventure. It gives great satisfaction to all of us.



2024/01/31  
Bryan Woy

## Contents

• Letter from the President	p. 1-2	• Advice from André Diéval	p. 28-31
• Thanks for 2023, new introductions, new members	p. 3	• Damien Blottière's work placement	p. 32
• Our three former Presidents	p. 4	• Maurice and Clare Foster's visit	p. 33-34
• A tribute to Jean Renault and Anne Nicolle	p. 5	• Red earth for blue hydrangeas in Brazil	p. 35
• CCVS manifesto to sign if you wish	p. 6-7	• Martine Merlin and Bernard Tordeurs' garden	p. 36-39
• Book review: "The Hydrangea" by Maurice Foster	p. 8-9	• A selection of white flowers at 'Shamrock'	p. 40-48
• Jack Aldridge's visit	p. 9	• Correspondence and photos, Rudolf Fischer	p. 49-51
• 40 years of introductions at 'Shamrock'	p. 10	• A look at the origins of the 'Shamrock' garden	p. 52
• The Founders	p. 11-13	• Daniel Kuszak's memories	p. 53
• Correspondence with Japan	p. 14-15	• La Fête des Hydrangéas	p. 54/55
• Katrin Meinl, Germany's star hydrangea grower	p. 16-21	• Josy Anne's early memories of 'Shamrock'	p. 56/57
• André Diéval's Saxon cultivars	p. 22-23	• The 'Shamrock' team	p. 58/59
• Saxon cultivars at 'Shamrock'	p. 24-25	• Marie-France Doll – my new varieties	p. 60
• German hydrangea hybrids at 'Shamrock'	p. 26-27	• Symposia on the Hydrangea genus	p. 61/62
• Veules-les-Hortensias?	p. 27	• Heard at 'Shamrock'	p. 63
		• Other remarkable visits, Annual General Meeting 2023	p. 64
		• Editorial team and picture credits	p. 65
		• Fête des Hydrangéas poster, 13/14 April 2024	p. 66

## Thanks for 2023

The Association would like to thank all the members and friends who have contributed in a thousand ways to the preservation and embellishment of the collection. For continuation of the work in the collection, we cannot express enough thanks to our weekly “dream team”: Jean-Marie Rouet and Jean Marc Schoepfer, an unbeatable pair who can’t be put off by any task, however hard it may be, Pascale Gicquel, in charge of the avenue of lime trees, Claire Perrin, Anne Nicolle (see her watercolour on the cover of this Journal), Stéphanie Poulain, Christine Barge, Valérie Lobry, Benoit Granger, Hervé Dezerald, and Francis Mulot, that tireless facilitator. Also, a huge thank you to Ghislaine du Tertre, for her outstanding support to our team. André Diéval and Madeleine Alves have often come to carry out woodcutting, hedge trimming

and clearing work, assisted by the ever-faithful Hervé Lepetit. As a professional tree pruner, we can always count on our friend Emmanuel Gasdon from “Sol en cimes”: [emmanuel.gasdon@orange.fr](mailto:emmanuel.gasdon@orange.fr).

This year we have once again had the help of Léo Largeaud for cutting the grass, and Clément Varin for numerous transplantings, stump removals, and various installations, fences and runoff drainage for the new car park. We are very grateful to our webmaster Philippe Picherit, who is responsible for the layout of our Journal. Finally, on the American side, we would like to mention the unfailing support over the years of the AHS (American Hydrangea Society) and its vice-president Ozzie Johnson, himself a researcher and explorer and a very dear friend.

## New cultivar introductions in 2023

- ‘Ankong’
- ‘Airagun’ (*H.serrata*)
- ‘Asabe’ (*H.serrata*)
- ‘Bright White’
- ‘Charme’
- ‘Cocktail’
- ‘Dewa-no-Hana’ (*H.serrata*)
- ‘Magicien’
- ‘Elbe’
- ‘Elegance’
- ‘Green Shadow’
- ‘Guepard’
- ‘Hercules’
- ‘Hortbux’
- ‘Kermi C2’ (*gr.Villosa*)
- ‘Little Blossom’
- ‘Little Rosy’
- ‘Little Spooky’
- ‘Mojito’
- ‘PC Paintinnng’
- ‘Pinky Promise’
- ‘Pink & Rose’
- ‘Strawberry Blossom’
- ‘Sugar Rush’
- ‘Summer Love’
- ‘Switch Ophelia’

## New members at Shamrock

BARLE Marie-Madeleine	HOLLAND Peter (UK)	TANGI Rabin
BELLEGO Élisabeth	HORNAK (USA)	TANGUY Franck
BOUTRY Bernie & Janique	LEPRÊTRE José & Christine	KOWALCZYK Marcin (Pol)
CRESCENTINI Jean-Pierre & Ghislaine	LABBÉ Monique	STACHAK Tatiana (Pol)
DOAT Nathalie	OZANNE Véronique	VAUGHAN Isabelle
GIRARDIN Marie-Claire	PICARD Fabrice & Nadine	VINCENS Dominique & Corinne
	RANSON Bruno & Martine	WATTS Graham (UK)
	SAGAERT Yves & Lucie	PIGNAL François & Élisabeth
	SCRIBOT Michel & Monique	



## The three former Presidents of Shamrock in action



*Pierre Courquin, Bernard Schumpp and Jean-Pierre Péan*



*Bernard Schumpp*



*Bernard Schumpp and Jean Renault*



*Bernard Schumpp*



*Jean Guibert and Jean Renault*



*Robert de Bosmelet*



# Obituary

## Jean Renault

Dear Children of our friend Jean,  
We can never say enough about what a pleasure it was for us to meet Jean at the SNHF in 2002, when “Shamrock” was giving a lecture on the Hydrangea genus. Jean was the first person to buy the “International Index of Cultivar Names” which had just been published by the Association. Since then, we never stopped exchanging information and plants to enrich our respective collections. But it was above all his passionate nature that endeared him most to us, and the trip to Japan that he made with our members, including Bernard Schumpp and Jean-Pierre Péan, gave him the opportunity to meet Corinne Mallet’s Japanese friends, whom she had met on her own 5 trips to Japan from 1991 onwards. To sum up, I think I can say that we really enjoyed each other’s company, and his coming to the collection several times a year to take cuttings, assisted by Jean-Pierre Péan, and then returning them to us for conservation purposes, was a great opportunity to meet up again and exchange information. The gift of plants he made to us when he came to our annual celebrations in Varengeville-sur-mer further consolidated this mutual friendship. That’s why all our members who knew him well join me in expressing their sadness. The photos of him that we published in our last Journal no. 34 will help them to remember his wonderful smile. We believe that in another world he will discover other secrets of the botanical beauty of Creation, of which we still have only a faint idea. Jean will have helped us to broaden our knowledge of it.

RM

## Anne Nicolle

It’s impossible for us, her volunteer friends, to forget her familiar silhouette, “an aristocratic gardener” always wearing unlikely but very chic hats....

She felt at home amidst the beauty of the hydrangeas and would occasionally paint watercolours. The diversity of colours and shapes of these plants was a great inspiration to her. Her talent shines through in her last work, which we have put on the cover of this Journal.

She loved tall trees and planted many (a forest!) in her own garden. She also had a passion for the smaller plants that grew on a slope and required constant care. These were her own preserve, in the midst of all the other wonders in the garden.

We can’t talk about Anne without mentioning Christiane Le Scauff, who now lives in the south of France, with whom she worked as a team.

The two of them formed an impressive duo when they attacked the nettles or the goose grass... They also knew how to make wonderful bouquets!

Anne, we miss your smile and your cheerfulness.



*Myriam, Anne and Claire Perrin*



*Jean Renault and Jean-Pierre Péan*



*Nadia and Anne Nicolle*

**CCVS manifesto to sign if you wish:**

<https://www.ccv-s-france.org/manifeste/>

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# BOTANICAL HERITAGE, CAPITAL HERITAGE

## MANIFESTO FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE LIVING PLANT HERITAGE©

**In light of the geopolitical, climatic, social, cultural, economic and environmental upheavals that have appeared in recent years**, it is time for plant collectors to take stock and find out what makes sense and in which direction to go. What do plant collections represent for the general public, developers, local authority leaders, and the various organizations working to safeguard biodiversity? What tools are available for the cultural and economic development of our territories for the benefit of their inhabitants' well-being? This is the debate organised by the third University of the CCVS in Paris in the presence of European experts on September 14 and 15, 2023. It is indeed the official recognition of this Living Plant Heritage which will be asserted and requested, there, with all national and European political leaders.

**As is well known , the notion of heritage is complex and global.** All forms of heritage are linked, connected and interdependent. And yet, if built heritage or intangible heritage have been recognized for a long time, the same is not true for living plant heritage© (PVV©). Plants are the essential link in the chain of life, essential to human activities. It is humans who need plants to live, and not the other way round. This is about bringing together our efforts to better know and better recognize wild and cultivated, botanical and horticultural plants, and the conditions for their conservation. It is our future not to consider plants just as raw material to be squandered for the benefit of a few. This time of recognition of the PVV© also requires a rediscovery of its own territory. The balanced companionship of Men & Plants has never been as relevant as today.

**The Living Plant Heritage® (PVV®) is made up of all plants in all their forms, in isolated or grouped situations.** These plants are a wild heritage, in situ or ex situ, or a horticultural heritage associated with know-how. These trees, shrubs, perennials, annual plants, etc., can be brought together in specialized and documented collections, on specific sites or in networks of sites to better qualify their acclimatization faculties.

**The PVV© is a heritage to be passed on. Sharing to preserve these botanical and cultivated treasures also implies the word heritage**, what we will leave to the following generations. We are the heirs of this living plant heritage collected and studied by generations of gardeners, including great botanists and explorers, distinguished breeders and hybridizers, from scientific institutions to passionate individuals...

# CCVS manifesto to sign if you wish:

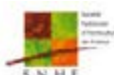
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In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it opened in Europe a phase of introduction and diffusion of new plants without precedent, a real botanical safe to be preserved and promoted. It is indeed in the phylogenetic resources of this Living Plant Heritage© that we can find elements of resilience and innovative responses to deal with current brutal changes such as climate change, economic models, social changes and societal issues, new consumer expectations, serious phytosanitary problems, health and food security concerns, etc.

**The value of the PVV® will be recognised through the creation of a national and European label. This manifesto is a request for the official recognition of Living Plant Heritage® by granting a PVV® label.** This national and European, if not universal, label remains to be built together. Its aim is to raise awareness among our contemporaries of the importance of plants, cultural markers of human history. It will make it possible to solicit various national or European foundations and funds in order to launch major preservation and transmission projects. It will have to be taken into account on various platforms, land use planning and town planning documents and will be perfectly complementary to existing systems more oriented towards a dimension of exploitation of rights than towards heritage recognition in the broad sense.

**This first manifesto initiated by the CCVS is signed by a panel of national and European associations dedicated to promoting the PVV®, and by anyone sensitive to this subject.**

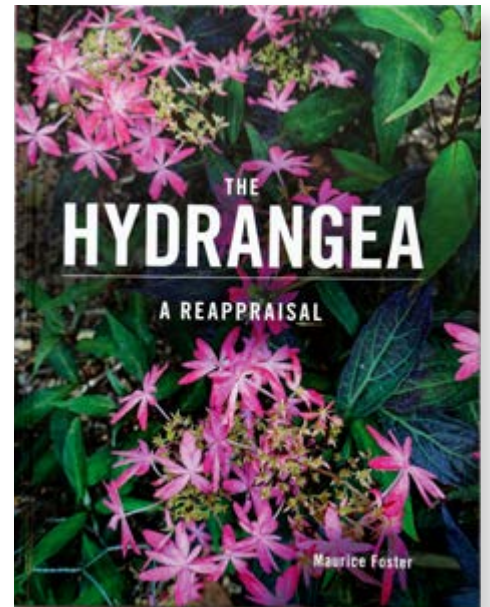
**It is intended to be enriched as actions are carried out.**



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## “The Hydrangea” by Maurice Foster



“The HYDRANGEA: a reappraisal” Maurice Foster (December 2023)

On Christmas Day, we received this long-awaited and beautiful book from our friend Maurice. He and his wife Rosemary accompanied Corinne and me from the early 1990s, on the recommendation of his friend Peter Chappell. Peter was as passionate about the Hydrangea genus as we were. We regularly stocked up at his ‘Spinners’ nursery.

Now for the book! It’s the work of a plant enthusiast who has taken part in numerous expeditions, especially in Asia. From these trips he collected seeds and built up a remarkable arboretum near Sevenoaks, south-east of London.

During his travels he built up a network of friends and professionals with whom he still corresponds and who have been able to provide him with photographic material. As a member of the Woody Plant Committee, which awards the Royal Horticultural Society’s famous AGMs (Award of Garden Merit), he always favours “good” garden plants that have proved their worth, rather than potted plants selected for decoration. As he tests the plants himself in his garden, his opinions are very important to us, as they will be to future readers of his book.

Over the years, Maurice has specialised in two subsections of the Hydrangea genus: the Asperae and the Macrophyllae (in particular *H. serrata*). The two chapters of his book devoted to them are phenomenal. In addition to describing those that can be found in the commercial circuit, many of which are still little known, he talks about those which have not yet been named, the result of his seedlings and selections.

For *H. aspera*, let’s name them:

‘Hot Chocolate’ and ‘Rosemary Foster’. For *H. serrata*, he cites an impressive number of cultivars, many of which are waiting to be marketed after a rigorous selection process in his garden.

This is because he was quick to understand the close relationship between *H. serrata* and *H. macrophylla*, the two species naturally inter-hybridising in the wild in Japan. Corinne Mallet had also observed and described this in her monograph “Portraits of Hydrangeas” (2008).

Maurice, who has visited the ‘Shamrock’ collection on several occasions (see photos), has devoted two pages to it in his book. He appreciates the work carried out there over the last 40 years to increase knowledge of the Hydrangea genus. He has followed the many publications, books and articles, in French and English, that have resulted from observations made there. I would like to thank him warmly for this.

Thanks to Maurice Foster, England will undoubtedly make up for the delay in using hydrangeas in its gardens and landscapes. He has looked into the reasons for this marked indifference over the past few decades. This, however, hasn’t been due to a lack of people - authors or nurserymen - trying to arouse the interest of this insular public in the beauty of these plants. He quotes Michael Haworth-Booth, author of a famous book on the subject (“The Hydrangeas”, re-published for the 4th time in 1984). Michael had been Maurice’s training supervisor as a young man in the 1950s.



Maurice also devotes several pages to a completely forgotten English plant breeder, H.J. Jones, several of whose varieties have found a place of honour in the 'Shamrock' collection.

When it comes to taxonomy, Maurice, like all specialists, refers to the work of Elizabeth McClintock. In his remarkable work, he tells us about this famous botanist's tendency to "lump together" several similar species, rather than "splitting" them into a larger number. Elizabeth had also visited Maurice's garden at the "White House Farm" and corresponded with him. Today, with the information provided by genetic analysis, a certain confusion has arisen between the phenotype observed in the field and the new genotypic information. Maurice advocates a degree of descriptive flexibility while awaiting further information, as the plant genome can express itself differently in different biotopes.

With regard to the species in the Heteromallae sub-section (*H. heteromalla* and *H. paniculata*), and those in

the Macrophyllae sub-section (*H. macrophylla* and *H. serrata*), Maurice has drawn on the 'Trials' organised by the RHS to highlight the best cultivars from the 19th century to the present day.

In doing so, he has provided invaluable information for anyone wanting to start growing these magnificent plants, which are so diverse in appearance. His book is a mine of information.

As a bonus, we have photos and descriptions of plants from other, little-known subsections of the *Hydrangea* genus, which we leave to readers to discover.

All in all, a major book that will go down in the history of the *Hydrangea* genus.

Thank you, Maurice.

RM

## Narissa and Jack Aldridge's visit

Thank you so much for the wonderful time we spent with you last week, you are so generous. It was a pleasure to meet you at last and a real treat to see your most incredible collection – wow! I am not exaggerating when I say I have never seen *Hydrangeas* growing and flowering so freely! There are too many highlights to name, but we both left more excited by *Hydrangeas* than ever before.

I hope we will keep in touch and this is the beginning of some good and useful correspondence. If you are happy for me to do so, I will send you what I am writing about *H. longipes* & *H. robusta*.

Hopefully for a future article in the Plant Review – for you to comment on. I am very grateful for all your help.

Look forward to visiting again soon,

Jack and Narissa



## Forty years of introductions: LG 2700! For *H. aspera* ‘Kermit’



*H. aspera* ‘Kermit’

*H. aspera* Hydream® ‘Kermit’ is the latest introduction, under the code number LG 2700, a gift from Jean-Paul Davasse. ‘Kermit’ is the name of the variety, Hydream® being the trademark used for some of his creations. It is a seedling of ‘Hot Chocolate’: it has green foliage, and its main characteristic is that it is very bushy from a young age, unlike many *H. aspera* plants, and also very free-flowering. It is a compact plant growing to a maximum 1.50 to 1.80 metres over 10 years. This makes it more suitable for smaller gardens.

This code, LG 2700, shows the continuity of the work carried out in research and knowledge of the *Hydrangea* genus in Corinne Mallet-Hoyé’s collection at the rue de la Cayenne site in Varengeville sur mer. Following on from the same survey carried out in 2012 and published (p.3) in issue no. 22 of the Association’s Journal, this new document clearly shows that Corinne Mallet-Hoyé’s collection continues to grow, justifying the renewal of its “National Collection” label by the team of experts from the Conservatoire des collections végétales (CCVS) in 2022.

### Origin of introductions of plants in Corinne Mallet’s collection (1984 to 2011)

As well as the many plants taken from cuttings by Corinne since 1983, many collectors and nurseries have contributed to the Shamrock Collection. First and foremost were Jelena and Robert De Belder (Jardin de Kalmthout, Belgium), who recognised Corinne’s passionate interest in hydrangeas very early on, and gave her many of them as gifts.

Sir Ambrose Congreve, an Irish collector of old cultivars, gave several to Corinne.

Nurseries included the British Hilliers Nursery, Spinners Nursery (Peter Chappell), Great Dixter and Firma Esveld in the Netherlands. Entire collections were then added to



*H. aspera* ‘Hot Chocolate’

this first collection, in the form of gifts: Maison Dussine: 135 cultivars, Wisley: 118 cultivars (recovered from the Rosewarne collection).

Corinne’s acquisitions and exchanges continued from then on: Paradis Desjardins (43), Didier Boos (137), Den Bulck (21), Crûg Farm (126), Pride of Place Plants (28), E. de La Fonchais (47).

Other gifts or exchanges with foreign collections were also very fruitful: Louisiana Nurseries, Zuschendorf Botanical Garden (84), Maurice Foster (47), Glyn Church (34) Wilkerson Mill Garden (15), Ozzie Johnson (10), Spring Meadow Nursery (9).

A good number of well-known breeders supplied their latest varieties for observation and experimentation: K.&W Hofstede, Marie-France Doll, M. van Klaveren, Jean Renault, Kees Eveleens, Lionel Chauvin, Sicamus, Minier, Boos-hortensia (20,) Katrin Meinel (19).

Finally, it should be remembered that a very large contingent of plants was brought back by Corinne from Japan during the five trips she made between 1991 and 2000, plants that she collected or received as gifts, or which were later brought to her by Japanese or French friends returning from their travels. Among these gifts were those from Takeomi Yamamoto sensei (34) and Takaaki Sugimoto san (60), not forgetting the very delicate *H. serrata* selections from Fujii sensei in Kobe.

*Corinne Mallet (9 February 2024)*



## The Founders



*Corinne*



*Robert and Bryan*



*Henri Guyomard*



*Martine Diéval and Nicole Schumpp*



*Daniel Kuszac*



*Henri and Josy Anne Lamache*



*Didier Boos and friend with 'French Bolero'*



*Jean-Pierre and Jean-Marie*



## The Founders (2)



*André Diéval and Madeleine Alves*



*Gallia Guillaume*



*Lisa Bartlett and Jean Astrop*



*Ozzie Johnson*



*Hervé Lepetit*



*Christiane Le Scamff and a friend*



*Henri Pavie*



## The Founders (3)



*Yves Sagaert*



*Claude Voisin*



*Harry van Trier*



*Guy Lahogue*



*Ghislaine du Tertre*



*Marie Josée Boullanger*



*Roger Dinsdale*



*Jean-Paul Davasse*

## Correspondence between the Mallets and Takeomi Yamamoto sensei

Here are two examples of letters sent to Takeomi Yamamoto sensei; a correspondence which lasted from 1991 until his death.

To : Takeomi YAMAMOTO sensei

January 18th, 2002

Very dear Master,

I am writing you this new letter as I noticed that there was still a point you wished to discuss to which I didn't talk in my last letter.

SHIKIZAKI (questions) : I do not know the plant called 'Shikizaki', n° 64 in your guide. This is why I have questions when you tell me that I said at Sagamihara that this plant had been obtained in France. It is possible that I mention the fact that some hybrids of 'Rosea' existed over here which keep flowering until the first frosts (which is true). May be I said at Sagamihara that the plant looked to me to be an European hybrid or even an old French plant. Truly I must admit that I do not remember to have seen this plant at Sagamihara or elsewhere. This being said, if I have actually seen however this plant, it is possible that I have recognized an old European variety. But really I do not remember.

Also you tell me that this Hydrangea is being known in Japan since 1950 under the name of 'Christmas' and that the seller said that it was a Japanese plant. This name 'Christmas' seems rather strange for the years 50's in Japan. I don't think there so many Japanese christian in Japan at that time. I do not imagine that a Nihon-no-hito would have given that western name, whatever its origin, either found in nature or from a batch of seedlings.

In turn, I have some questions. Is there a booklet showing all plants bred by M.EBIHARA ? This would be very helpful for me to see their pictures, name and dates of their appearance. Filiation would be very interesting too if it exists. Of course if this booklet would be in English language that would greatly help. Does anyone know who introduced M. EBIHARA's plants in Europe.

I would very much like to know if there is already such booklet or catalogue showing M. SAKAMOTO 's wonderful plants. Do you think I could have a copy ?

You will find herewith a scanned picture showing winter twigs and buds of 'Rosea' (left) and 'Nikko Blue' (right). As you can see 'Nikko Blue' has more carmine red buds than 'Rosea' (more green and red).

I also send you a scanned picture of a Hydrangea found on the border of Vietnam by our friend M. Maurice Foster, an English plantsman who collects plants in the wild. He supposes that this plant is *H. indochinensis*. In the small window below I have enlarged the view of the seeds (about 2 and 1/2 enlarged).

What do you say of this plant ?

With all my respect and admiration.

Corinne Mallet





## Correspondence between the Mallets and Takeomi Yamamoto sensei *(continued)*

To Takeomi YAMAMOTO sensei

June 4th, 2002

Dear Master,

Please find enclosed 3 copies of the final English version of your text for the Japanese Hydrangea Color Guide.

Soon we will add your foreword and an index to help readers finding the plants they are looking for.

The Courson Flower Show went very well (30.000 visitors). We sold half the guides you had sent us, mostly to important people (including some English specialists, like Roy Lancaster and Michael Hickson). Thank you so much to have taken care of the shipment also financially. I hope you could cash my cheque as I have not been debited yet !... Tell me if there is any problem.

We open the collection to visitors next June 15th and are very busy making it up to standard. The labelling for visitors has taken us a lot of time, but we were able this time to have a complete list with the names and date of breeders and cultivars nearly complete.

Corinne works a lot as usual and would like to write you soon herself, but she must finish a guide for visitors of the collection and distribute leaflets all over the region. Our benevolent helpers are wonderful but we wish they were more numerous. But that is not up to us to decide.

Hoping you are both well and that your flowering season will bring you lots of joy,

Sincerely yours

Robert Mallet



## Katrin Meinl

### Germany's star hydrangea grower

At Robert Mallet's request, I contacted Katrin Meinl and was lucky enough to be able to talk to her.

Katrin Meinl is a German hydrangea breeder. She is rightly considered a star in Germany: over the last 30 years, she has bred more than 33 varieties of hydrangea, all of them *H. macrophylla*.

She began working with hydrangeas in 1993, in Saxony, at the Nieschütz nursery, which mainly produced seedlings and flowering plants for the trade. At that time, she was just a temporary member of the group responsible for creating new hydrangea cultivars, led by Christa Hofmann. Katrin Meinl took over responsibility for this department in 1995 when the incumbent plant breeder left the firm.

Katrin Meinl has always lived in Dresden, the capital of Saxony in the former East Germany. This region of Germany has a long tradition of producing and creating hydrangeas. Saxony was home to many famous breeders, including Friedrich Matthes, Hermann Dienemann and Nieschütz. Despite reunification in 1990 and the ensuing difficulties for companies and nurseries, some of which disappeared altogether, this unbroken line has continued and Katrin Meinl has followed in their footsteps with the Saxon series.

Matthias Riedel, manager of the hydrangea collection at Zuschendorf Castle, where for several decades he has been responsible for the 500 cultivars in the collection, writes:

"Hydrangeas have been at home in Saxony for over 200 years. For exactly 100 years, Saxon growers have been adding new varieties to this magnificent diversity. They are unique in that all the breeders involved have continued to develop existing cultivars. Hermann Dienemann's breeding work was based on plants bred by his predecessor Friedrich Matthes. Dienemann's selections served as the basis for those of Nieschütz, and Katrin Meinl still uses Nieschütz's material today".

A total of 87 new varieties were created over the course of a century, including around thirty by Katrin Meinl. 58 of these are still present in the Zuschendorf collections.

Matthias Riedel, an indefatigable expert on the subject, adds: "The cultivation of hydrangeas in Saxony today, still in the experienced hands of Katrin Meinl, is based on five innovative approaches:

- Black stems, such as 'Schloss Zuschendorf'
- Crosses with *H. serrata*, such as 'Gräfin Cosel'



- Double inflorescences for varieties suitable for hanging baskets, such as 'Haba Pink', 'Haba Soft Pink' and 'Floria'.
- Cold hardiness with repeat flowering varieties such as 'Diva Fiore'.
- Compact plants suitable for table decoration, such as 'Tabletensia' or 'Table Rose'.

Returning to my discussions with Katrin Meinl, she explained that for seedlings it takes her around two years from pollination to flowering. She then selects the seedlings which look interesting, and the following year at the earliest she produces a small group of clones (propagated by cuttings from these seedlings), and this is when the test phase begins. In the following years she cultivates the clones, studying various cultivation criteria (sensitivity to disease, when forcing is possible, optimum pruning dates/pot sizes, yield from cuttings/rooting, different planting locations, etc.).

It can take 6 to 8 years from pollination to the application for varietal protection.

And she adds:

"I don't breed plants at a high scientific level. I work in a very simple greenhouse and I make growing mistakes every day. The plants have to cope with conditions that are also found in most ordinary nurseries. In this way, I can observe the characteristics as they might appear in the nurseries of other growers. I also have very strict selection criteria. Only plants that stand out 'in spite of my cultivation' are retained for further testing."

I went on to ask her what she thought had changed in the hydrangea market and among growers in recent years.

"There have always been trends that go in one direction or another. Whether it's the colours or the sizes of the plants (which are also determined by the sales period), there are so many variations and new ideas or old ones that keep coming back.

"But what I believe will play an increasingly important role, and to which horticulturalists will have to adapt, is the...

... aspect concerning energy consumption in the production of flowering plants (e.g. forcing temperatures, the need for assimilation light) and the increasingly limited use of chemical substances for plant protection and growth control. Resistance or tolerance to disease must be an essential part of selection”.

And when I asked her for an anecdote about her work that might be of interest to readers of the ‘Shamrock’ journal, Katrin didn’t hesitate to let me in on a little secret:

“At the festive hydrangea exhibition in Pirna-Zuschendorf (the castle near Dresden housing Germany’s most important collection of hydrangeas), it is customary to hold a christening ceremony for recently bred varieties.

“This event has always been good publicity for Zuschendorf, the exhibition and the collections. As horticulturists, we always prepare flowering plants for these events.

“One year, we saw that the plants that were to be named had serious flowering damage. To remedy this, we decided to present an existing double-flowering hydrangea for the ceremony, which was very similar to the original plant. All went well: the people present, most of whom were not hydrangea specialists, were satisfied and nobody noticed the exchange.

“It was only afterwards that Matthias Riedel, who was in charge of the collections, approached me discreetly and whispered “What on earth has happened? That wasn’t the ‘real’ one!”

“This convinced me, if proof were needed, of Matthias’s keen sense of observation...”

Matthias Riedel and Katrin Meinel are two key figures in the contemporary history of German hydrangeas.

### **Some examples of Katrin Meinel’s cultivars:**

In recent years, Katrin Meinel has created a large number of new varieties. Some of them have only been developed for a few specific nurseries or for certain countries, and have not therefore become widely known. Others were so enthusiastically received that they were and still are produced in huge quantities.

#### **‘Schloss Wackerbarth’**

With the variety ‘Schloss Wackerbarth’, christened in 2008, it wasn’t just North American tastes that were satisfied; the bicoloured sepals, which start out as an irregular mix of light green and pink and end up a dark red, were a hit on the world hydrangea market. The Americans have bought the rights and named it ‘Pistachio’, which is easier for them (and us!) to pronounce.

The breeder herself wasn’t very convinced by this new hydrangea. It was thanks to her boss at the time, Torsten Kühne, co-owner of Claus und Torsten Kühne Jungpflanzen GbR, that its value was recognised and it was registered as a variety.

#### **‘Diva Fiore’**

“‘Diva Fiore’ is a tried and tested variety”, says Matthias Riedel. And he adds:

“For our continental climate, this reflowering variety is probably the greatest sensation to have been created in recent decades. It flowers reliably, even after the harshest winters and persistent late frosts».

It has to be said that in Saxony, temperatures regularly drop to minus 30°C.

Since the early 90s, when hydrangeas began to ‘emerge’ in German gardens, the question of their suitability for the climate has been raised. Of the 360 varieties planted in Zuschendorf, only five proved to be reasonably reliable when it came to flowering. It took almost a quarter of a century of intensive and serious cultivation work before the first cold-resistant variety worthy of the name was finally marketed.

Katrin Meinel worked on “her” plant for nine years before being satisfied enough to release her new creation in 2014. The variety is very stable, which is how it is described by Artmeyer, the nursery now responsible for marketing it.

In 2015, Kühne Jungpflanzen GbR and the plant’s breeders were awarded a gold medal by the Deutsche Bundesgartenschau Gesellschaft (DBG).

In 2016, ‘Diva Fiore’ was awarded the German Horticultural Innovation Prize with the following citation: “Its reliable repeat flowering and pronounced winter hardiness, combined with a modern and attractive appearance, are considered by the jury to be a successful combination and a real innovation.”

#### **‘Tabletensia’**

With this variety, created in 2017, a whole new chapter has been written in the world of hydrangeas: that of the ‘table hydrangea’! Katrin Meinel has created a whole new series of plants that are small, cute and bursting with buds. The first one, ‘Tabletensia’, is already available: bright pink (or purple) with numerous inflorescences, a round habit, excellent branching and stability.

At the 2018 World Horticultural Trade Fair (IPM) in Essen, among 1,600 exhibitors from 46 nations, the new selection was awarded the special “Novelties” prize. ...



... Since 2018, Katrin Meinl has been working for HBA (Hydrangea Breeders Association), an association of Dutch and German hydrangea growers (Kötterheinrich Hortensienkulturen de Lengerich) who have sought to give new impetus to the hydrangea world. Success has proved them right. HBA has taken over hydrangea growing from KÜHNE (SAXbreeding), where Katrin Meinl had previously worked. The breeder herself, and the cultivation material, have remained in Dresden (Omsewitz). However, as marketing is now carried out directly by HBA, it is no longer possible to know which varieties come from Dresden (and therefore from Katrin Meinl).

The current breeding priorities (2023) at Omsewitz are for repeat flowering (and therefore winter hardy varieties) and for table hydrangeas.

### **Cultivars bred by Katrin Meinl:**

'Meissen' (2007), 'Pillnitz' (2007), 'Stolpen' (2007), 'Rathen' (2007), 'Schloss Wackerbarth' (2008), 'Sonnenstein' (2009), 'Schloss Zuschendorf' (2010), 'Georgentor' (2010), 'Kronentor' (2010), 'Bright Red' (2010), 'Kleiner Winterberg' (2010), 'Graf Brühl' (2011, unrecorded), 'Gräfin Cosel' (2011), 'Kurfürstin Sophie' (2009), 'Grünes Gewölbe' (2012), 'Style Pink' (2013), 'Bright White' (2014), 'Diva Fiore' (2014), 'Table Rose' (2014), 'Candy Heart' (2011/2016), 'Tabletensia' (2017), 'Chameleon' (2018), 'Fire Wings' (2011/18), 'Dragon'

(2011/20), 'Fabolo' (2012/2019), 'Floria' (2013/2021), 'Fleurine' (2011/2018), 'Haba Soft Pink' (2011/2018) and 'Haba Pink' (2011/2018), 'Elfy' (2014/21), 'Double Crown' (2011/21) and 'Code Rosé' (2017/23).

Especially for the American market:

'Edgy Hearts', 'Horabstra', 'Violet Crown Saxwhimar' and 'Abracadabra Hororb' (Meinl 2023).

*Eliane Lebret*

*(Interviews conducted for 'Shamrock' in March and July 2023 with Katrin Meinl and Matthias Riedel).*

## **Supplement: correspondence between Eliane Lebret and Matthias Riedel**

### **Matthias Riedel discusses the ancestry of Saxon plants**

The Rampp company originated in Pfaffenhausen (Bavaria) and in 1999 transferred its breeding stock to Klaus Olbricht of the Elsner (PAC) company in Dresden. In 2004 the company went bankrupt and its stock was sold on to the Dutch company Kwekerij de Stadsweiden, Harderwijk. In 2004, Zuschendorf was able to retrieve the Rampp plants for its collection. The two plants bred by Katrin Meinl, Schloss Zuschendorf and Gräfin Cosel (with black stems) are the results of cross breeding with Rampp plants.

But Matthias considers that Rampp doesn't belong to the Saxon lineage.

### **Relative hardiness of Saxon plants**

According to Matthias Riedel, these are the hydrangeas that are most resistant to the harsh Saxon winters (-20° to -30°C) and that manage to flower in season: 'Diva Fiore', 'Bouquet Rose', 'Westfalen' and 'Maréchal Foch'.

A little less hardy, but acceptable: 'Semperflorens', 'Altona', 'Deutschland', 'Kluis Superba', 'Passion', 'Magical Diamond', 'Blauer Prinz', 'Tosca', 'Together', 'Lady Taiko' and others in the "Lady" series.

Saxon photos (1)



'Bright Red'



'Bright White'



'Candy Heart'



'Diva Fiore'



'Fleurine'



'Fleurine'



## Saxon photos (2)



‘Gräfin Cosel’



‘Weenstein bicolor’



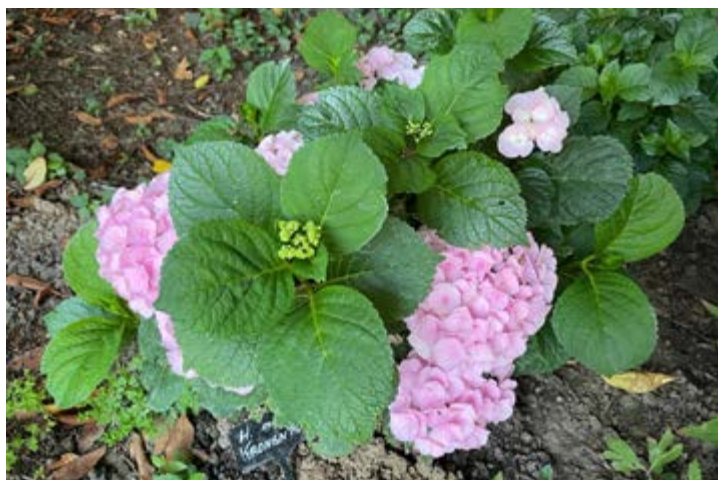
‘Floria’



‘Grüne Gewölbe’



‘Haba Soft Pink’



‘Kronentor’



Saxon photos (3)



'Lillenstein'



'Table Rose'



'Odensee'



'Pillnitz'



'Rathen'



'Schloss Zuschendorf'



Photos of André Diéval's Saxon cultivars (1)



'Gräfin Cosel'



'Gräfin Cosel'



'Meissen'



'Meissen'



'Pillnitz'



'Rathen'



## Photos of André Diéval's Saxon cultivars (2)



'Rathen'



'Rathen'



'Zuschendorf'



'Zuschendorf'



'Stolpen'



'Table Rose'



Photos of Saxon cultivars at 'Shamrock' (1)



'Königstein'



'Königstein'



'Pillnitz'



'Pillnitz'



'Meissen'



'Rathen'



Photos of Saxon cultivars at 'Shamrock' (2)



'Stolpen'



'Stolpen'



*Saxon flower bed*



# Inventory of German hydrangea hybrids at 'Shamrock' (June 2023)

(from Éliane Lebret's list)

## SIEBOLD

- H. pan 'Grandiflora' 29
- H. inv. 'Hortensis' Z2
- H. mac 'Otaksa' 7
- H. 'Yodogama' 41
- H. luteovenosa (virens) Z2

## BRUNNEMANN (0)

## WINTERGALEN

- 'Lanzelot' 14
- 'Niedersachsen' 21
- 'Parzifal' 14
- 'Toska' ('Tosca') or 'Amethyst' ? 57
- 'Weisse Schwan' 44

## MATHES

- 'Blauer Prinz' 21
- 'Gartenbau Kunert' 21
- 'Heinrich Seidel' 21

## SCHADENDORFF

- 'Altona' 14
- 'Europa' 14
- 'Holstein' 14

## FISHER

- 'Fishers Silberblau' cutting

## BRUGGER

- 'Alpenglühn' 14
- 'Ave Maria' 58
- 'Bodensee' 20
- 'Merkur' 14
- 'Montfortperle' 14
- 'Schwabenland' ('Chambellan') 7/44
- 'Schnee Ball' 28

## STEINIGER

- 'Adria' 19
- 'Blauer Zwerg' 8
- 'Dundalk' Wing n° 5
- 'Elmar Steiniger' 19
- 'Enziandom' 18
- 'Gerda Steiniger' in André Diéval's collection
- 'Immaculata' 19
- 'Koralle' 47B

- 'Lemmenhof' 18
- 'Sibilla' 19
- 'Mathilde Gütges' 28/33/30
- 'Max Löbner' 18
- 'Renate Steiniger' 18/3
- 'Rheinland' 21
- 'Vorster Frührot' 47 B
- 'Weisse Königin' 19

## BOSSE

- 'Ticino' 47 A/Wing n° 1
- 'Ursula' 21 ?

## RAMPP

- 'Berlin' 17
- 'Blue Earth' Wing n° 1 (north)
- 'Colorado' Wing n° 1 (norh)
- 'Côte d'Azur' Wing n° 1
- 'Kopenhagen' Wing n° 1
- 'Lissabon' Wing n° 1
- 'London' Wing n° 1
- 'Moskau' Wing n° 1
- 'Nizza' Aile 1
- 'Odense' 47 B
- 'Ohio' Wing n° 2
- 'Orion' Wing n° 1 (?)
- 'Oslo' Wing n° 2
- 'Synelle' Wing n° 1
- 'Rom' 17 ?
- 'R4' Wing n° 1
- 'Venedig' Wing n° 1
- 'Wien' 17 ?
- 'Zurichsee' Wing n° 1

## DIENEMANN

- 'Bautzen' 41
- 'Blauer Ball' 14/47 B
- 'Leuchtfeuer' 14
- 'Nymphe' 5 (and stock)
- 'Red Baron' 32

## STEINIGER (Elmar)

- 'Eugen Hahn' 47 B
- 'Sonja' 19
- 'Sonntagskind' 47 B
- 'Steina 104' 19 (probably wrong)

## Inventory of German hydrangea hybrids at 'Shamrock' (June 2023)

### NIESCHÜTZ

- 'Albrechtsburg' 20 (for propagation)
- 'Diskus Rosa' Wing n° 1
- 'Elbtal' Wing n° 1
- 'Heinrichsburg' 39
- 'Moritzsburg' 39

### KIENSTLER HORN

- 'LK 49' 14/30
- 'Kirsten' 14/ 47 B
- 'Messalina' 45

### STANGERT

- 'Red Wonder' 11/ Wing n° 6 (south)

### HEMPEL

- 'Bela' Wing n° 4

### MEINL

- 'Diva Fiore' 47 A
- 'Königstein' 20/47 B
- 'Lilienstein' 47 B
- 'Meissen' 47 B
- 'Pillnitz' 47 B
- 'Rathen' 47 B
- 'Schloss Hirschstein' 47
- Schloss Zuschendorf' Y2
- 'Stolpen' 47 B
- 'Table Rose' 47 A

## Veules-les-Hortensias?

Seen at Atelier Roba, Veules les Roses, during the "Au tour des mots" literature festival.

A little poem about hydrangeas by Michel Robakowski.





## Advice from André Diéval

### A few gardeners' tips!

**Late frost:** Late frost can cause rot. Bordeaux mixture can be used to prevent it. You need to be careful with this product. The copper in it is bound with lime, so use it sparingly.

Late frosts are often preceded by drought. Watering afterwards is advisable.

Do not prune immediately. Wait 3 to 4 weeks and if new growth appears, then prune back the areas affected by the frost.

**Scorching:** Provide shade where possible. Use plants that are resistant to heatwaves. Watering is beneficial in dry spells (rainwater, if possible, but be aware that an excess of water kills hydrangeas, especially *H. serrata*).

**Take care:** crown rot may become a serious problem!

Otiorrhynchus (vine weevils, etc): an oily garlic maceration and an infusion of rue (*Ruta graveolens*) are effective. A purine of tansy is also good.

**Flea beetles (Alticini):** Although not too harmful to plants, they can harm the appearance of hydrangeas. You can use a repellent such as catnip (*Nepeta cataria*), which has repellent properties.

- Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is easy to find. It is an insecticide and insect repellent.
- Ivy (*Hedera helix*) is an insecticide and insect repellent.
- Mint
- Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) infusion
- Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) as an insect repellent
- A maceration of garlic ...

**Scale insects (mealy bugs, etc.):** The best remedy is to cut and burn.

- Neem oil is very effective (although it can also destroy the beneficial insects, so a targeted treatment is necessary).
- For prevention, use repellent products. (see flea beetles)

**Deer:** Garlic maceration gives good results. (Effectiveness is limited in time, treatment must be repeated often). Wrapped bamboo impregnated with repellents can be planted, hidden in the foliage. They love the leaves of *Hydrangea quercifolia*, for example.

**Slugs:** Purines made from fern and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) both seem to give good results.

Traps can be made using beer, as well as mulch barriers (chestnut burrs, crushed glass, or wood ash, although the latter is not recommended for hydrangeas as it causes chlorosis).

**Leaf spot disease:** a preventive treatment with copper is a good solution, and a purine of horsetail will strengthen the plants' defences, again as a preventive measure. Some hydrangeas are more susceptible than others. In all cases, take preventive action.

As soon as any spots appear (which are fungal in origin), and which spread from the bottom to the top of the plant in the rain, remove and burn the first leaves, as well as those that have already fallen to the ground and dried out.

**Powdery mildew:** Sulphur can be useful (do not treat during hot weather). A garlic maceration, a decoction of nettles, whey and horsetail are all very effective. All these treatments can be applied by spraying.

**Botrytis:** A decoction of nettle is recommended. Horsetail purine also works well. Bordeaux mixture can be used as a preventive measure in hot, humid weather.

Inflorescences and young stems affected by this disease must be removed (cut and burned). It is important to use clean cutting tools.

**Wilting:** Ground that has become marshy, field mice that attack the roots and create burrows around the base of the plant, or otiorrhynchus grubs that feed on the roots can cause sudden wilting. More serious are brush clearing operations using the dreaded string trimmer, which can tear the bark from the base of the plant. Excessive watering after bright sunshine (or hot weather) also contributes to the wilting of our plants, whose scorched foliage can no longer transpire. Whenever there is a heatwave, watering should always be done BEFORE it starts!

Vascular diseases often lead to the death of the plant. These include verticillium wilt and Armillaria root rot, often affecting mature plants. Pythium root rot attacks young plants more readily.

Iron chlorosis: The plant is not adapted to your soil.

**Viruses:** BURNING THE PLANTS is the only solution.

There are 4 methods of producing natural plant protection products:

**Purine or fermented extracts** are stimulants (bio stimulants, to be used for watering and prevention in moderation).

**Maceration:** this is a cold preparation and is quick.

Decoction: soak cold for 24 hours, then heat to boiling, cover and leave to cool, filter before use.

**Infusion:** boil the water, add the finely chopped plants, leave to cool for 24 hours, cover, filter and use.

# Are your hydrangeas in good health?

## Diagnosis by the leaves

### Late frost

In March or April, the leaves can be damaged by frost. Avoid exposing hydrangeas to the sun in winter. Protect certain types of hydrangeas.



### Scorching

The leaves are scorched by the sun. Avoid exposing plants to the sun during the hot hours of summer. Provide shade during heatwaves.



### Otiorrhynchids (vine weevils, etc)

Adults make notches in the edges of leaves. Larvae are apodous (legless). They devour roots. They cause a great deal of damage.



### Flea beetles (Alticini)

A multitude of small holes can be seen on leaf blades (riddling of the leaf blade). A small metallic-coloured "hopping" beetle, it also likes inflorescences.



### Scale insects (mealy bugs, etc.)

Small sucking insect. White coloured colonies on leaves. They weaken plants, and the plants can actually die!





## Deer

Damage can be very serious. They like *paniculata*, *arborescens* and *quercifolia*. (roe deer in my garden).



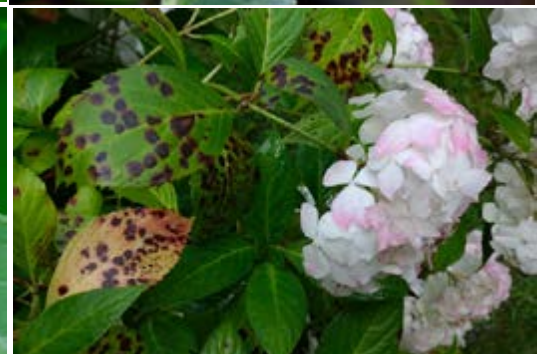
## Slugs

A silvery slime betrays their presence. Damage to young plants is considerable.



## Leaf spot disease

Several different fungi cause this disease.



## Powdery mildew (*Microspora polonica*)

Ascomycota fungi

Progression of the disease (photos), leaden tint of the leaves. It occurs at the end of the season. Sulphur is often used.



## Botrytis cinerea (grey mould)

On leaves and inflorescences.





## Wilting of the part above ground.

Asphyxiation of the roots - photo n°1 (unsuitable soil, soil too heavy, marshy ground, over-watering).

The roots rot and the plant dies.

Period of drought - photo n°2

Or a fungal attack?



## Iron chlorosis

Physiological disease.

The soil is alkaline (unsuitable for growing hydrangeas).



## Viral disease

### Hydrangea virescence

Inflorescences turn into leafy structures.

### Destroy the plant



**Other diseases and pests can affect our hydrangeas. We must remain vigilant.**

**I've found a very good book (in French) that respects nature and helps us look after our plants:**

**Les Alternatives Biologiques aux pesticides : solutions naturelles au Jardin et en Agriculture. Éric Petiot and Patrick Goater. Escalquens : Editions Terran, 2020.**



## Damien's work placement (end of October 2023)

Report on the work placement carried out at the end of October 2023 at the 'Shamrock' collection, as part of the Bac Pro adult education course.

"Landscaping" course run by the Paris City Council. In partnership with the École Du Breuil.

Damien Blottière

With the Shamrock Garden and an autumn sun as my backdrop, I imagined a world through the stories of discovery and exploration that were told to me.

With Hydrangeas as my guide, my imaginary travel diary begins on the banks of the Yodo River, which links Kyoto to Osaka and on which merchant ships sail to the Seto Inland Sea.

*H. macrophylla* 'Yodogawa' enjoyed a mild climate here when the Bavarian naturalist Siebold included it in his catalogue in 1846 and introduced this very free-flowering shrub to Europe. It has flat heads, blue or pink in colour, in corymbs of small fertile flowers encircled by single sterile florets and bright green dentate leaves. Further east, the cliffs of the Izu Peninsula, south-west of Tokyo, face the Pacific Ocean. *H. macrophylla* 'Izu-no-hana' welcomed the first foreign explorers here in 1854, offering them its numerous inflorescences made up of double sterile star-shaped florets in beautiful shades of pink turning carmine in autumn, borne on dark green glossy foliage. In neighbouring Kanagawa prefecture, Thomas Hogg, the heir to a prosperous business as a florist and nurseryman in New York, made several trips to Japan between 1862 and 1875 and collected many seeds which he sent to North America. This is how *H. macrophylla* 'Thomas Hogg' came to be introduced, with its sumptuous, spherical, repeat flowering inflorescences forming dense, white "pompons" to decorate gardens like bouquets. This was the first introduction in the West of a hydrangea with white, ball-shaped flowers.

In autumn 2023, not far from the cliffs of Varengeville, I met 'Yodogawa', 'Izu-no-hana' and 'Thomas Hogg' for the first time in bed n° 41 at 'Shamrock'. This compact clump of around thirty square metres of historic hydrangeas can reach a height of nearly two metres. It had grown considerably and needed to be reorganised. That was to be my job. In the centre, two Paulownia tomentosa with very large leaves provide necessary shade in summer, while to the north, a hedge of Fagus sylvatica protects it from the cold winds. The air is perfumed with the delicious scent of caramel, diffused by its neighbour the Katsura, Cercidiphyllum japonicum 'Pendulum' to the south.

'Yodogawa' is a champion of layering; established in the north of the bed 20 years ago, it preferred the south

and conquered the space by multiplying 10 times, then 20 times during its journey to get more light. Without upsetting it, I decided to separate the northern group, dividing the plants with a spade and weaning the clumps from their mother plants with secateurs. The clumps that have been removed were placed in containers or pots and labelled before being taken to other gardens. The long-term preservation of the plant seems assured.

I took advantage of the opening that had been created to go into the heart of the bed and thin out all the stumps. The cleared bed was like a battlefield. I dug a shallow spade into the surface to break up the loamy soil and levelled it with a rake. This is where I planted *H. macrophylla* 'Thomas Hogg' in a mixture of compost-enriched soil, alongside *H. macrophylla* 'Izu-no-hana' and *H. macrophylla* 'Yodogawa'.

With my work now done, I contemplated the bed and realised the distance travelled in time and space. A century and a half of history, exploration and passion have brought together this collection of rare plants, and others besides. In a context of climate upheaval, the challenge of invention and imagination to preserve them is great.

"We have everything to learn from plants" and "we can't live without them", "the plant kingdom is a set of chords and harmonies that the gardener must know how to interpret in a melodious way" and "each new planting is a small victory", my placement supervisor told me. So, there's plenty of inspiration for new adventures.





## Maurice and Clare Foster's visit (24 July 2023)

This summer we were very happy to welcome Maurice Foster and his daughter Clare to 'Shamrock', with a view to ensuring the future of his own hydrangea collections (particularly cultivars of *H. serrata* and *H. aspera* which he has bred himself, including, among others, 'Hot Chocolate'). This was his second visit to 'Shamrock', after which he noted that our collection is "a permanent test bed for the Hydrangea genus".

His book (below) came out in late 2023.



Dear Friends,

*We both enjoyed our visit to Varengeville beyond words and thank you so much for helping to make it so special. Your collection exceeded all our expectations especially in the wonderful quality of the flowers; and the range of colours and forms is remarkable. I love the dark blues and purples in particular. The varied cast of supporting plants, notably small trees like Cornus and Styrax that you have added, bring another dimension to the collection. It is all a massive achievement on your part and it has been a real privilege to witness its growth over the years and the pleasure it is now obviously bringing to thousands of visitors. We loved it and Clare found her first time visit a unique experience.*







## Red earth for blue hydrangeas (November 2023)

*What a surprise when you arrive in this part of Brazil (south-east, between Rio and Sao Paulo) to see, firstly, magnificent hedges of blue hydrangeas and, secondly, to discover that they grow in red soil! A far cry from our standards of peaty soil or almost black humus.*

*These soils are very clayey and contain a lot of iron, which explains the blue colour of the flowers, matching that of the sky.*

*Who imported them?*

*Some European expatriates homesick for their homeland?  
In any case, a wonderful discovery!*

*Eliane Lebret*





# Martine Merlin and Bernard Tordeurs' garden

## A look at the white *macrophyllas* in my garden.

In days gone by, white hydrangeas were given as gifts for various occasions: first communions, Mother's Day celebrations, weddings, etc. They would take pride of place for a short while in our homes, but in the heat of our interiors, they rarely survived in the open ground. They were often white mopheads called "hortensias" in France and other European countries. Today, the white hydrangea is making a comeback and conquering our gardens. Its inflorescences come in a wide variety of shapes: balls, flat heads, cones and stars. Sober and elegant, they brighten up dark corners of our gardens and create pretty contrasts. In this article, I'll be focusing mainly on *H. macrophylla*. Many are in fact cultivars resulting from a large number of cross-breedings. We will simply note them by the letter H. Only the pure *H. macrophylla* that come directly from Japan will carry the name of the species. The hydrangeas I'm going to tell you about were observed in my garden "Les Sentes de l'Hydrangée", located in Flobecq, Belgium, in the "Pays des Collines" nature park. It's a gently sloping garden of just over a hectare. The acidic clay soil retains water well. Many remarkable trees and shrubs have been planted to create areas of half-shade that are ideal for hydrangeas. I have chosen most of the plants below on the basis of observations in my garden; it is, therefore, a subjective choice.

## Mopheads: elegant and timeless

### Great Classics

Let's start with a few old varieties:

H. 'Mme Emile Mouillère', a plant created in 1909 that remains forever in fashion. Its inflorescences, first green then white, give us a long flowering period. In September, the flowers turn slightly pink and, the icing on the cake, are mixed with young, remontant white flowers. It has a soft, drooping habit. Ideally situated at the bottom of a slope, it is protected by a number of trees which provide a perfect setting. It is accompanied by H. 'Blaumeise' which creates a lovely contrast.

H. 'Sœur Thérèse' is less fortunate as it is situated at the top of the garden, surrounded by maples and birches, making it thirsty in midsummer. Watered frequently, it also receives compost and mulch. I pamper it a little because it is the star of this shady corner, which it adorns so beautifully. Its habit is more upright than H. 'Mme Emile Mouillère'.

We should also mention the ancestor of the white mopheads, *H. x serratophylla* 'Thomas Hogg', one of the first hydrangeas imported from Japan before 1900, and the majestic H. 'Mme Gilles Goujon', which can reach 2 m in height.

There are many other varieties that have been developed over the years. It is impossible to cover them all here.

We could mention H. 'Ave Maria', one of the smallest white hydrangeas with round heads;

H. 'Nymphe' with very serrated sepals; H. 'Bichon', a beautiful late variety; H. 'Jofloma', remarkable for its yellow foliage, but tricky to grow.

Some cultivars have been mainly developed for the florist's trade. These include

H. 'Clarissa', H. 'Schneeball' and H. 'Wudu'. They will grow well in the garden after a few years of proper care.

## The first to flower

Every year I wait impatiently for the first flowering of a hydrangea that I'm particularly fond of, H. 'Le Cygne'. It is a good metre high and forms a large, very harmonious mass. It begins to flower gradually towards the end of May. At first a delicious creamy white, it then turns pure white and finishes in slightly pink tones. The end of its flowering is not extraordinary here, but it is too exposed to direct sunlight. This hydrangea could do very well in a pot.

We could also mention H. 'Rahic', a hydrangea much loved by our friends in Brittany, also small in size, free-flowering and early.

Another hydrangea, H. 'Glyn Church', comes to us from New Zealand and is both early-flowering and enchanting. It forms very pretty little white globes that turn pink then raspberry-red at the end of flowering. With a height of around 1m20, it too could easily be grown in a pot.

## My personal favourites

I really like H. 'Shakira' ("Dutch Ladies" series) with its slightly serrated, rounded sepals, which overlap in a very unusual way. Pure white, it then turns very slightly blue and fades wonderfully into a blue-green mixture. I have observed slight reflowering in this plant at the beginning of September.

H. 'Holibel' ("Hovaria" series = "kaleidoscope") is very slow to start flowering. The beautifully soft green flowers first open around the edge of the plant, followed by those in the centre, which are very tightly packed. The plant turns a very pure white and finishes flowering in soft pink tones.

*H. macrophylla* 'Miyakejima Temari' is a large hydrangea with a spread of around 2 m and a very natural appearance with its large, loose, drooping inflorescences.

H. 'The Bride' ("Endless Summer" series) is capable of re-flowering throughout the season if care is taken to regularly cut back the faded flowers. Its generous white inflorescences with sometimes double sepals contrast prettily with 'Bottstein' at the bottom of the garden.

I'll finish off with a hydrangea that performs wonderfully both in our beds and in pots: H. 'Wedding Gown', a small hydrangea that is both graceful and robust. It brings a breath of fresh air to the world of hydrangeas. The round inflorescences, made up of a multitude of small triple stars, are a real delight.

Pure white punctuated with pink; it turns a magnificent deep red in autumn. The plant stays looking beautiful for a very long time.

### Some novelties

H. 'Curly Wurly White' is a newcomer in the same spirit as *H. macrophylla* 'Ayesha' and H. 'Hopcorn', but more compact, and with a new colour, white, which makes it extremely interesting. So far, I've tested it in a pot, but unfortunately, I lost it when I tried to plant it in the ground. To be continued!

H. 'Bright White' (Boss) is a small hydrangea that is perfectly suited to pot growing. We love its regular globes of pure white. It looks a bit like H. 'Hollibel', but is more compact. I've kept one in a pot; the other will overwinter in the ground. Stay tuned!

Two more new additions to the "Rendez-vous" series:

H. 'Angélique' has a compact, rounded habit. It bears semi-double white flowers.

H. 'Chocolat pur' has black stems.

Let's finish with these modern hydrangeas from the "Magical" series. H. 'Jade' and H. 'Noblesse', which start flowering in soft green tones; white then dominates for a long period and, at the end of the season, the flowers turn red. In our garden.

"Magicals" do well in pots, but are more stunted in the garden. I've lost a few of them. However, in the gardens of Brittany, I was astonished by their resistance and their more natural appearance.

### Lacecaps: light and delicate

Old varieties

*H. macrophylla* 'Mariesii' (= "Rosewarne pink") a plant over a hundred years old that has retained its wild, natural appearance.

H. 'Beauté Vendômoise', a plant over 2 m tall that is very useful at the back of a flower bed.

The great classics

The "Teller" ("plate" in German) series of hydrangeas from the Wädenswil station in German-speaking Switzerland made a major contribution to the development of lacecaps in the 1960s. They are mostly named after birds.

The best known is H. 'Libelle' (dragonfly). This timeless hydrangea can grow to 1.50 metres in any direction. It can be recognised by its rounded, cup-shaped sepals. This majestic shrub is perfect for brightening up a shady corner.

Other hydrangeas in the same series include H. 'Bachstelze' (grey wagtail), which has a stiffer growth habit, and H. 'Elster' (magpie), which is smaller.

I particularly like two hydrangeas that are very easy to grow

and a must in my garden. They are *H. x serratophylla* 'Lanarth white' and *H. x serratophylla* 'Shiro Gaku'. They tolerate the sun relatively well and fade to a lovely soft green.

*H. x serratophylla* 'Pengwyn' (not actually a penguin, except that the name of the bird probably derives from the Welsh "pen gwyn", meaning "white head") and *H. x serratophylla* 'Professeur Iida' are large shrubs that retain their natural, pastoral character.

I will end by mentioning two hydrangeas that I have lost and that are well worth looking at: H. 'Dandenong', a compact, luminous flower with blue or pink fertile flowers.

H. 'James Grant', a generous plant for the back of a flower bed.

### My personal favourites

From the Netherlands, H. 'Koria' is immediately noticeable for its highly serrated sepals. It is a visually striking plant, but a little temperamental. It has always thrived in pots. After a few unsuccessful attempts in the open ground, it has finally adapted well and provides wonderful light in a wooded area.

H. 'Shooting Star' lives up to its name admirably. A myriad of double stars on flat inflorescences that shoot out from all sides. This hydrangea fascinates our visitors.

*H. macrophylla* 'Hanabi': bunches of small double stars appear from the foliage like fireworks. This plant is as original as H. 'Shooting Star', but lighter and more natural. What's more, it flowers again in autumn.

*H. macrophylla* 'Izu-no-odoriko' A magnificent, vigorous shrub native to the Izu peninsula in Japan. The inflorescences are made up of sterile double white flowers which then turn slightly pink. I have placed it in a sheltered, shady spot to enjoy its long flowering period.

*H. macrophylla* 'Nadeshiko gaku' is a very graceful plant with its many blue fertile flowers. The white sterile florets have a slightly bluish tinge.

*H. macrophylla* 'Mikanba' retains its smooth, glossy foliage in winter. It is evergreen in protected conditions. With our milder winters, it flowers every year. I love its beautiful inflorescences with sterile blue flowers and highly serrated white sepals. The flowers turn slightly blue as the season progresses.

### Some novelties

H. 'Elegance' ("Rendez-vous" series). Both sterile and fertile flowers are pure white. They wave gracefully against a green background and turn delicately pink in autumn.

This plant is a breath of fresh air among flat-headed hydrangeas. Its sturdy stems and compact, regular habit look particularly good in a pretty pot. I'll try planting it in open ground in the spring. Stay tuned!



H. 'Choco chic' ("Rendez-vous" series)

The black stems of this hydrangea create a lovely contrast with the white inflorescences borne on dark red peduncles. This graceful plant is well suited to growing in pots.

I'll end this article by mentioning a novelty that is the result of a hybridisation between a *H. macrophylla* and *H. scandens*: H. 'Runaway Bride'. *H. scandens* is a species of hydrangea that is still little known. One of its characteristics is that the flowers bloom all along the branches. It is a very early bloomer, being the first to flower at the end of May. The plant's spreading habit makes it ideal for pots.

This novelty is a real revolution among hydrangeas, and promises many other new discoveries in the years to come.



'Mme Émile Mouillère' (X) and 'Blaumaise' (XL)



'Sœur Thérèse' (X)



'Le Cygne' (X)



'Shakira' (X)



'The Bride' (X)





'Shooting Stars' (X)



'Hanabi' (XL)



'Mikanba' (X)



'Koria' (S)



'Jade' (X)



'Jofloma' (S)

*Height of plants : S (small), X (medium), XL (tall)*



## A selection of white flowers at ‘Shamrock’

In this inventory we have not included the species *H. paniculata*, which is particularly well represented by numerous cultivars of various sizes, both early and late, with or without inflorescences which turn pink or red, such as ‘Vanille Fraise’ for example.

As for the other species and hybrids and their selections, there is a huge choice of white-flowered plants to brighten up our gardens.

### Exposure to the sun?

In general, white-flowered hydrangea cultivars, other than *H. paniculata*, which like sunny locations, are more sensitive to direct sunlight because of the lack of pigments in their inflorescences. In fact, we have seen in the ‘Shamrock’ collection that the darker the colour of the flowers (i.e. the more pigment they contain), the better they stand up to the sun. For example, ‘Côte d’Azur’.

As far as *H. macrophylla* hybrids with “white ball” inflorescences are concerned, we will take here the case of the famous ‘Madame Émile Mouillère’ variety, recognised as one of the best, even the very best, for over a century. Some will complain that it turns pink at the end of the season. Although it has no pigments (by definition), its sepals do contain certain ‘sugars’ which turn pink when exposed to sunlight. So, to keep them “pure white”, they should be grown in shady areas.

Another detail, but one that is important for this marvellous plant, is that in the centre of the sterile florets that form the ball of its inflorescences, there is a small pearl, a copy of a fertile flower, which can take on either a blue or pink colour depending on the nature of the acid or basic soil. In the blue version, the white “Persil” effect, like the brand of washing powder, is magical. Added to this is the fact that the flowering is remontant and therefore almost continuous.

As for the white cultivars that take on a red colour in late summer, with “ball” or “flat” flowers (also known as “lace-cap” flowers), this red colour is qualified by the adjective “beni” in Japanese. Thus, we have *H. serrata* or hybrids ‘Beni Gaku’ (with a white fertile heart) or ‘Beni Yama’ (with a blue fertile heart).

Let’s take the case of a spectacular plant called ‘Grayswood’ dating from 1888, of English origin. Growing up to 2m tall, it requires a shady spot like most *H. serrata* and their hybrids, which is the case here. It only takes on its dark red “beni” (lacquer red) colour when exposed to the east. Flowering on the current year’s growth, this plant can be pruned to limit its development, which will also make it more resistant to drought.

We have included photos of white hydrangeas grown in the ‘Shamrock’ collection, so as to differentiate between the species selected.

### Selection of white “ball” flowers



‘Ave Maria’ (S)



‘Blanc Bleu’ (X)



'Bridal Bouquet' (X)



'Bright White' (X)



'Charles Guyon' (X)



'Immaculata' (XL)



'Le Cygne' (X)



'Libelle' (XL)





'Marie-Louise Dussine' (X)



'Neige Orléannaise' (S)



'Snow Ball' (X)



'Trophy' (X)



'Weisse Königin' (X)



'Wudu' (X)





*'Mme Émile Mouillière'* (XL)

*Height of plants: S (small), X (medium), XL (tall)*

## **Selection of white “flat” flowers**



*'Angel Light'* (XL)





'Green Tonic' (S)



'Hanabi' (XL)



'Junsui' (X)



'Lanarth White' (XL)



'Mariesii' (XL)



'Odoriko-no-Amache' (XL)





'Seafoam' (X)



'Shooting Stars' (S)

### Selection of *H. serrata* with white flowers



'Fuji-no-Taki' (S)



'Shiro Fuji' (X)



'Murasaki Henge' (S)



'Shirotae' (S)



## Selection of hybrids turning red



'Beni Gaku' (X)



'Beni Yama' (X)



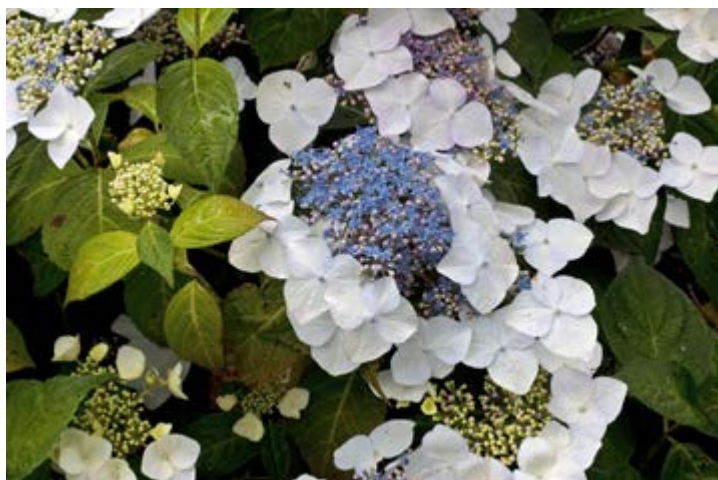
'Glyn Church' (S)



'James Grant' (X)



'Tokyo Delight' (X)



'Veitchii' (XL)





'Wedding Gown' (X)



'White on White' (S)



'James Grant' (X)



'Wedding Gown' (X)





## New varieties



'Coco' (S)



'Coco' (S)



'Elegance' (X)



'Runaway Bride' (X)

## Other botanical species



'*H. angustata*' (S)



'*H. involucrata*' (S)



## Correspondence Rudolf Fischer 27/07/2023

Hello,

Last Sunday I had the opportunity of visiting your collection of Hydrangeas and the light was ideal for taking photos of the flowers.

I've put them together in a gallery on the web.

If you would like to use some of them for your printed or digital publications (which would give me great pleasure), I authorise you to do so free of charge on the sole condition that you mention the photographer "Rudolf Fischer" and thus respect the copyright that I retain for these photos.

You can download the photos directly from the gallery. The resolution should be sufficient. Should you need higher resolution images, simply ask me to send you the photos in their original resolution and I will do so.

Your garden is a little jewel. I enjoyed it very much.

Best regards.

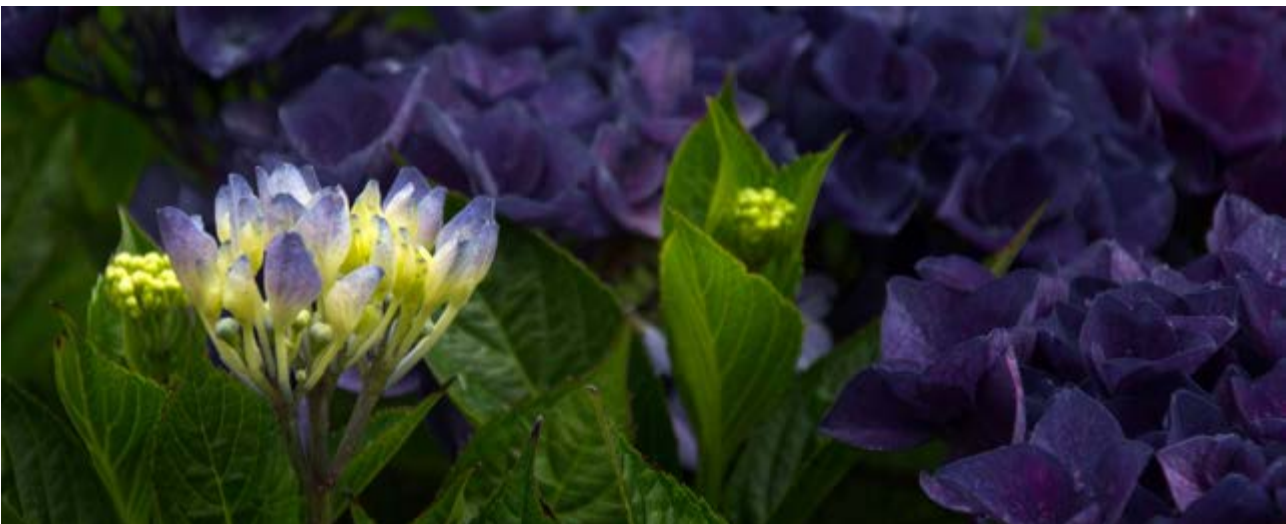
Rudolf Fischer

Austrasse 31

CH-5430 Wettingen













## A look at the origins of the ‘Shamrock’ garden

After the collection’s first few years and three successive moves, it wasn’t until the winter of 2000/2001 that we were finally able to move to the present beautiful 2-hectare site. It was the members of the Ango joint estate who enabled us to rent this meadow adjoining the garden of the Manoir d’Ango, thanks to a kind gesture by our friend Claude Voisin who, on retiring, waived his right to the lease so that we could move in.

We had to transplant 60 tonnes of plants, taking care not to lose the labels! It was a challenge that our friend Henri Guyomard and the young people from his horticultural workshop at the medical and vocational institute “La Traverse” in Omonville tackled with courage, in very wet weather conditions! The pasture had turned into a field of mud.

This was a good opportunity to present the different cultivars and species of hydrangea according to their country of origin. In the upper part of the meadow, the European cultivars were presented, by country and breeder, in chronological order.

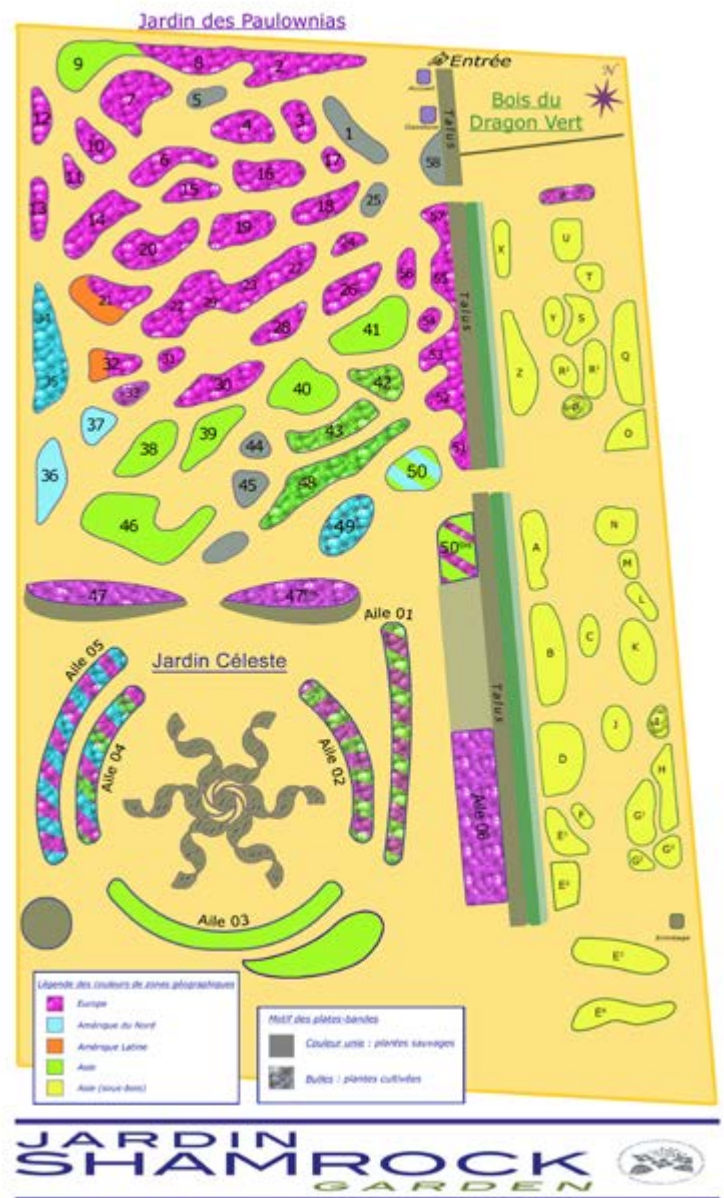
The lower part was reserved for introductions from Japan, following the 5 expeditions Corinne Mallet-Hoyé made from 1991 onwards. This part of the collection is presented in a setting similar to that found on the east coast of the archipelago, the Izu peninsula. These are *Hydrangea macrophylla*, or their natural hybrids with *H. serrata* (*H. x serratophylla*), all of them different and very vigorous, giving a striking image of nature’s extraordinary diversity.

The other parts of the site are divided into a woodland area, displaying mountain plants, also of Japanese origin, collected by Corinne Mallet-Hoyé during her expeditions to Japan, as well as plants given to Corinne by Takeomi Yamamoto sensei and his friend Sugimoto san, and plants donated by Fujii sensei, Corinne’s three correspondents in Japan.

The lowest part of the meadow, which was the last to be developed, was used to showcase cultivars of a highly promising Japanese species, *H. paniculata*, for which Jelena De Belder was the first breeder of hybrids, as well as species of North American origin, *H. quercifolia* and *H. arborescens*.

None of this could have been achieved without planting several hundred fast-growing *Paulownia tomentosa* trees to provide the essential shade for all these different plants. This bold move, which is now proving to be a pioneering one, has contributed to the success of the ‘Shamrock’ Collection. The association of Friends of the Collection, set up in 1994, has been responsible for part of the upkeep of the Collection ever since it moved to its current site. Without this team of passionate volunteers, the adventure could probably never have continued.

Corinne Mallet (9 February 2024)





## Daniel Kuszak 8 January 2024

The dramatic floods that have battered the Pas-de-Calais over the last few weeks have at least had the merit of giving me time to read, or reread, as any outdoor activity has been out of the question. That's how I got my hands - and eyes, of course - on the very first 'Shamrock' Association newsletters that I'd carefully kept. These were hand-made paper versions, with rare articles typed out and duplicated on the photocopier, with no illustrations.

A pilgrimage of sorts.

I was delighted to reread the few lines I dared to send to the "editors" in issue 3 (January 1996): "I had to tell you about my crazy dream up here, near Le Touquet. For the time being, it's a dream that stays underneath the pine trees, on a bit of humus and, above all, a lot of sand. There's still a long way to go..."

This dream gradually became reality, before withering and fading away, with increasing age and declining health. It was with great emotion that I rediscovered (in the special

edition of October 2000) the story of the expedition that finally enabled me to visit the Vasterival garden in the company of Hubert Buquet, the head gardener of the Valloires gardens, who had obtained the famous "open sesame" (visits were much harder to come by than they are today and it was essential to make an appointment with Princess Sturdza). In it, I recounted how, by dreaming too much about this mythical garden, 'Shamrock' had come crashing down on me. That was on 27 September 1995.

Many other episodes have punctuated this wonderful human adventure, without having been written about. These events have always been festive, and the many encounters always enriching. This adventure, that you sparked off, has now been going on for almost thirty years. The same age as our Association.

Thank you, Robert, thank you, Corinne for awakening me to all this beauty. The beauty of nature and the beauty of souls.



*Daniel*



*Jacqueline, Corinne, Hubert Buquet and Huguette Grossi*



*Etienne and Danielle Hoyé*



*The loge*



# La Fête des Hydrangéas 11 May 2023



*Madeleine Alves, Anne and Jean-Marie*



*Sophie, Thierry Lesaffre and Bruno*



*Jean-Baptiste of Chênes de Caux*



*Madeleine on André Diéval's stand*



*Madeleine and Tina*



*The peony stand*



*Jean Renault and Bruno Blanckaert*



*In the evening, after all the effort*



# La Fête des Hydrangéas 11 May 2023



*Martine and Madeleine*



*Martine Merlin*



*Nicole Hagneré and Bryan Woy*



*Visitors to the peony stand*



*Robert at the Chênes de Caux stand*



*Jean-Marie, Patrice Dupas and Gert Lebret*



## Josy Anne: Early memories of ‘Shamrock’

### September 93, our first visit to Robert and Corinne Mallet

After two hours spent chatting and drinking two pots of fairly strong coffee, I, who had only been familiar with hybrids of *H. macrophylla* “Merveille Rose”, and who had always had a passion for what I called “les hortensias roses” since my early childhood, was in quite a state.

We bought Corinne’s hydrangea book from them, and ordered several varieties for the spring. My husband Henri, a professional landscape gardener, volunteered to help transfer the entire ‘Shamrock’ hydrangea collection to the kitchen garden of the Château de Varengeville-sur-mer.

### July 2000 Hampton Court Flower Show

After 7 years of cooperation, we planned with Robert to present a hydrangea stand at the Hampton Court Flower Show in England, with Didier Boos’ plants. The Association was invited by Plant Heritage (formerly NCCPG).

**Sunday 2 July**, under the big marquee, we were shown the place where we would be exhibiting.

Then the great adventure began: creating a stand without any equipment. Using wheelbarrows full of gravel, pine bark and the contents of our one truckload of hydrangeas, we put everything together, including the decorations and advertising posters. We spent a crazy week, which fortunately ended in the final hours with some good sales. It was also a great time for meeting new people, and all in all a huge success for the Association. Later on, we were to receive some fantastic feedback from English visitors to the collection.



We were already thinking about the next Flower Show.

### July 2003 Hampton Court Flower Show again

Here we go again for another hectic week, with our stand in the same place, but this time on 42 square metres and with even more plants arriving from Angers with Didier, in a larger van hired specially for the purpose.

We decided to give volume to our presentation, and set up a stage on 3 levels, using pallets salvaged from the site, and Henri’s artistic work began. Like a jigsaw puzzle, by the evening our stand was a real eye-catcher, with our friend and eminent member Bryan Woy furnishing backdrops to the marquee with beautiful photographs.

Our reward was to be the BRONZE MEDAL, awarded on the Tuesday!

Not bad for French amateurs.

Without us: Robert, Henri, Didier, Bryan and myself in charge of organisation, it wouldn’t have been possible.

We were a little exhausted at the end of the week, but we were delighted with the good sales and the great encounters. And let’s not forget our wonderful friends Ted and Shirley Higgins, who put us up in beautiful rooms during these 2 shows, and also treated us to some very good meals in the evening. When we got home in the evening, we were treated to invigorating ‘gin and tonics’, slumped in comfortable armchairs to recover from the hectic activity of these two exhibitions, each lasting a whole week!



## Josy Anne: Early memories of ‘Shamrock’ *(continued)*

Thursday 29th May and Sunday 1st June 2003.

On the Thursday, we spent the day at the “Honfleur en Fleurs” festival, where we manned the “Jardiniers Collectionneurs” stand. We made some good contacts with people in the profession, made good sales and enjoyed the day. On the Sunday we set off again for Honfleur to join Robert for the last day of the show. We arrived in pouring rain, and Robert thought about closing down the stand, but the weather improved and we had a great time until 5 p.m., when the weather began to really deteriorate; Robert went to the car park to fetch the Renault Espace for us to pack up. As soon as Robert had left, a terrible storm hit the Public Garden where we were set up. There was panic among all the exhibitors, as a tornado blew most of the canvases off the stands, and what’s more, the water was rising at breakneck speed - there was talk of a tsunami sweeping down the coast. We thought about going to the emergency tent, but a lot of people had taken refuge there and now the water was rising so fast that it was a mad scramble as all the people were trying to leave but couldn’t. Henri told me to try and get out of the tent at all costs, as the water was now up to our waists; I was crying and thinking we were going to die and I shouted “Robert! Where are you? You’ve left us!” but - oh joy! - Robert reappeared, waving to us, and,

still in the water, with great difficulty we managed to reach each other, but finding it hard to move forward. The three of us helped each other to get to the car, but we had to be quick because if the engine took on water we’d be finished. We still managed to get into the car and slowly, against the current, we made our way up to the top of Honfleur, as fortunately we were parked near the shore. After some difficulty getting out of the car, we went into the Café du Commerce, which was packed but where everyone found a seat. We warmed up with 3 good hot toddies, drenched from head to toe, but alive. We were able to leave around 6.30pm. As we’d brought rain gear, we were able to take off our wet clothes and return in our underwear under the mackintoshes. Our honour was safe. Events like this once again strengthened our friendship. We learned later that the whole coast had been hit, and young people in Trouville had climbed trees to avoid being swept away by the waves that were breaking across the town. A friend from the France Bleue radio station was rescued by the fire brigade when she was trapped in her car with water rising halfway up the interior. Who said that ‘Shamrock’ was an association where everything was just fun? But you need a bit of action sometimes, and at least you don’t get bored!!!!

## Memories of Courson in 2012



*The ‘Shamrock’ stand*



*Stéphane Marie christening ‘Diamant Rouge’*



## The 'Shamrock' team



*Robert with a group of visitors*



*André Diéval*



*André Diéval*



*Anne Nicolle and Claire Perrin*



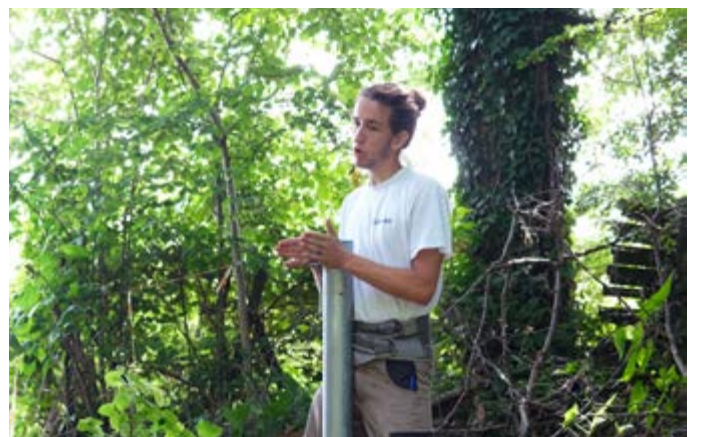
*Gilbert Baudouin*



*Bruno Blanckaert and Galina Guillaume*



*Nicole Hagneré and Bryan Woy*



*Clément Varin*



## The 'Shamrock' team



*Hervé Lepetit*



*Jean-Marc Schoepfer*



*Jean-Pierre Péan and Jean-Marie Rouet*



*Jean-Pierre Péan*



*Madeleine Alves*



*Martine Merlin and Madeleine Alves*



*Martine Merlin*



*Christine Barge and Pascale Gicquel*



## The 'Shamrock' team



Robert and Florian Rossiter



Stéphanie Poulain

## Marie-France Doll - My new varieties

I've always been attracted to hydrangeas, but when I was growing up there wasn't much choice in gardens, apart from H. 'Otaksa' and H. 'Sir Joseph Banks'.

When I had my first garden, I was lucky enough to make the acquaintance of Mr Pierre Michel-Kerneur, who became a friend whom I saw very often and who showed me around his hydrangea collection. I discovered flowers of which I was not even aware, in particular the flat-flowered *H. serrata* and *H. macrophylla*, of which there are many in his garden. He taught me their names, which I had to remember and recognise in his garden every time I went there. He was my mentor.

In 1998, in a pot of hydrangeas, I discovered some small plants that I didn't know and which I transplanted into individual seed pots. I suspected that they were seedlings from the parent plant. It was a discovery to find that hydrangeas (of which I only knew the 'mophead' sort at the time) even had seeds. I decided to try growing a few seedlings.

In fact, in 1998, I had a large collection of named hydrangeas. I started collecting seeds and then, the following year, I decided to start doing hybridisations myself, but only in *H. serrata* and *H. macrophylla*.

In 2005, I was able to breed an *H. serrata* with pretty flowers that remained pink even in acid soil. It was propagated and tested by SAPHO, a company based near Angers, and then protected.

On 6 April 2005, it was protected under the name *H. serrata* AVELROZ® 'DOLMYF'.

On 7 May 2012, one of my *H. serrata* Kiyosumi seedlings was protected. It was named *H. macrophylla* 'Dolkis', available under the name H. DOLCE® KISS.

Also on 7 May 2012, another of my *H. macrophylla* seedlings was protected, named 'Gipsy', its commercial name being *H. macrophylla* DOLCE® GIPSY.

On 18 March 2013, one of my *H. paniculata* seedlings, noted for its early flowering, was protected under the name 'DOLPRIM', marketed under the name *H. paniculata*

PRIM'WHITE® DOLPRIM.

On 22 May 2023, one of my *macrophylla* x *serrata* seedlings bearing large mopheads was protected under the name 'DOL-FRANC' and marketed under the name *H. macrophylla* DOLCE® FRANCE.

At the same time, I received seeds from Japan and from collectors' gardens, in particular seeds of *sikokiana* and various *asperas*. When I sowed the seeds, I noticed that sometimes a flower was different because it had been hybridised by another species, in particular *H. sikokiana* x *H. aspera* with green or purple leaves. I have obtained very few hybrids, but I still have some, including:

*H. sikokiana* x *H. aspera* 'Peter Chappell',

*H. sikokiana* x *H. aspera* with purple leaves,

*H. sikokiana* x *H. aspera* with pink flowers

These are curiosities that are not commercially available.

I've tried other interspecific hybridisations which have given me some interesting plants, but it's too early to talk about them yet.





## Symposia on the *Hydrangea* genus

Following a symposium held on the east coast of the United States, the Europeans decided to hold their own international symposium in Ghent in 2007. A bus tour to “Shamrock” took place. We were able to meet up with the major players of the day: Glyn Church, Michael Dirr, Sugimoto-san and many others. The slightly chilly visit ended with the distribution of an invigorating beverage (cider + Calvados).

(By Bernard Schumpp)

Organised by Hydrangea World Wide/Planète Hortensia (HW<sup>2</sup>, chairman Didier Boos) at the Terra Botanica theme park in Angers on 5 and 6 July 2012, with over two hundred participants from eleven countries and twenty-two speakers: Germans, Americans, Belgians, Danes, French, Italians, Norwegians, Dutch, etc., the symposium lived up to its objectives and the expectations of hydrangea lovers. In perfect harmony with the Terra Botanica themes (the Coveted Plant, the Generous Plant, the Mysterious Plant and the Domesticated Plant), the four sessions of the two-day symposium (Origin, Knowledge, Cultivation and Market) gave hydrangea professionals and enthusiasts a better insight into the world of the hydrangea.

It was then the turn of the Japanese to organise their international symposium in 2013. Members of the Association, including President Bernard Schumpp, Jean Renault and Jean-Pierre Péan, were invited to attend and brought back many accounts, photos and cuttings. Their expeditions to the southern part of the Izu peninsula added to our knowledge of this natural habitat for *H. macrophylla*, which Corinne had visited in 1992 and 1994.



*Sugimoto san, Glyn Church, Michael Dirr, Corinne Mallet 2007*



*Dinner in the St Martin church in Angers, 2012*



*'Shamrock' at Japanese Symposium 2013*



*'Shamrock' at Japanese Symposium 2013*





*“Terra Botanica” Symposium, Angers, 2012*



*Japanese garden visit, 2013*



*Japanese garden visit, 2013*



*H. sikokiana in the nature*



## HEARD at 'Shamrock', 2023 season

(in chronological order)

It's a Garden of Love (by a German baritone)  
It lifts you up  
I have an inner calm (more than in other gardens)  
Sumptuous garden  
Thank you for sharing this beauty  
What a beautiful garden oh! là là, là là!  
Paradise  
It's pleasing to the eye, and pleasing to the soul  
This garden is magnificent  
Stunning  
My compliments, very beautiful (in German)  
Remarkable (in German)  
Astonished  
Unique!  
Magical (M. Cox)  
Some plants make you feel like eating them  
Impressive (in German)  
Magnificent (in English)  
A feeling of being in a bath of flowers  
Super nice, overwhelming (in English)  
It's magical, poetic  
It makes you want to roll around in it (in front of 'Otaksa')  
Thank you for such priceless beauty  
It's a pure marvel  
Wonderful  
From the first minute you feel good and peaceful  
Fantastic, heaven (in English)  
Idyllic place  
Pure delight (in English)  
Perfect place (in English)  
A place for living  
Harmonious



## List of other remarkable visits

(in chronological order)

Madison Cox

Martine Bavent (Rouen Botanical Garden)

Pascale Aubertin (Hubert Reeves's photographer)

Louisiane Desbrosses (Brussels)

Olivier and Patricia de Nervaux

Denis Schneuwly (Geneva)

Camille LePape (Jardins Suspendus, Le Havre)

Elizabeth Murray (USA)

Mark Brown

Elisabeth Riesland (IDS)

Catherine and Jean-Marie de Bourgoing (IDS)

**'Shamrock' Annual General Meeting, 2023**



*After the Meeting*



## To contact the Association

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# Fête des Hydrangéas Shamrock

*Du samedi 13 au dimanche 14 avril 2024  
de 10h à 18h*



*hydrangéa 'Stolpen'*



*Pivoine 'yan wei bai'*

**Un très grand choix d'hortensias  
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