

# The Central Spine

Volume 2, Number 2

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

May 29, 1977

## A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION by GENEVIEVE OPPEN.

The Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society will be four years old on May 27th, 1977. Since its inception, our lives have been filled with pleasant experiences of discovering new friends, learning more about our hobby, and acquiring more and more plants. As our collections spilled over window ledges, patios and yards, we have had to build new shelves, tables, lath houses and greenhouses. Some may even have had to move into larger quarters to accommodate their burgeoning plant families, and all this because we joined the C.A.C.S.S.

Before the Society was formed, most of us pursued our interest in succulents more or less alone. Friends and neighbors sometimes glanced briefly at our exotic beauties and smiled tolerantly. Some, I am sure, considered us a bit foolish. Can you imagine the reaction of "normal" visitors upon seeing all those plants in Henry Triesler's bathroom? We needed friends with similar interests. BOB MOULIS tells us how we were brought together:

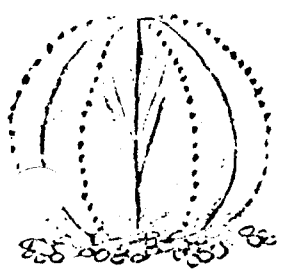
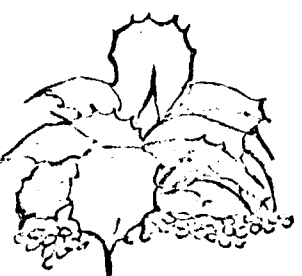
"For several years, whenever Henry Triesler and I got together, our conversations invariably fell into a familiar rut. Phoenix needed a club devoted to the growing of cacti and succulents. These talks usually took place after Cactomaniac meetings. The Cactomaniacs were a fine group, but their interests appeared to be more service and socially oriented rather than horticultural. We also felt that the club should be affiliated with the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. Upon discussing this with other members of the local cactus-growing fraternity, I received mixed reactions. Some thought it was a great idea, but others were horrified. The latter said it would ruin Cactomaniacs and draw members away from the Garden.

Henry and I were both enthusiastic Garden members and could personally see no conflict between the two, so we decided to get a reaction from Hubert Earle. After the dire warnings we had received, I was a bit hesitant, but we approached him on Sunday while picking up our plants at the close of the Cactus Show. The result stunned me. He said that it was a great idea and had felt the need for such a group for a long time. Only lack of time had prevented him from organizing one himself. We asked if we might have a list of entrants to the plant section of the Cactus Show and he graciously provided one. This became the nucleus of the list of people we contacted. Invitations to the organizational meeting were printed by Henry, and the society had its first meeting at his home.

The Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society was on its way...."

The invitations arrived early in April. On the next page is a copy of my letter from Henry.

On April 17th, Barcia and Lew Bremer, Martha Chester, Warner Dodd, Phil and Frank Hennessey, Lee Tolleson and I, plus the founding fathers, Bob Moulis and Henry Triesler, met at Henry's home. Through the excited chatter, they did manage a vote to form a local chapter of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America and to meet on the last Sunday of each month between 2 and 4 P.M. Frank Hennessey volunteered to write the



GENEVIEVE —

Your interest in cacti and succulents leads us to believe that you might want to join with other "aficionados" to form a local cactus & succulent society. We plan to meet informally each month and to conduct such other activities as members decide.

We expect to affiliate with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

We are more interested growing, collecting and learning about desert plants than we are in refreshments.

Our programs and speakers will be selected to help the serious grower become more proficient and knowledgable. Our only purpose will be to enable our members to derive greater satisfaction and enjoyment from our fascinating hobby.

If you are interested in becoming a charter member, please come to an organizational meeting on FRIDAY, April 13, 7:30 pm, at my home, 324 East Sheridan St. (Sheridan is the only street between Virginia & Oak). If you feel that you might want to be a member of the group but cannot attend the first meeting please call me at 252-1748 or Robert Moulis at 992-4166.

Henry C. Triesler, Jr.

by-laws. LEE TOLLESON recalls:

"The very first and very informal meeting of what would evolve, without too many birth pangs, into the C.A.C.S.S. happened at the place that Henry Triesler shares with his plants.

I don't think that any of us knew very much about the others in attendance, except that we were all interested in cacti and other succulents. There were differences of opinion on important questions, such as whether Warner Dodd should be allowed to smoke. Once these monumental questions were settled or allowed to die from neglect, we did agree that there was a need for an organization such as the C.A.C. S.S., and that we were to be it.

When Henry was finally able to silence Genevieve's enthusiastic conversations, he proclaimed the dichotomous birth of his and Bob's brainchild, the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society."

On May 27th, 1973, there was a meeting at the home of Bob and Elaine Moulis. All those who attended the April meeting were there, but also in attendance were Hubert and Lucille Earle, and a lanky fellow from Superior, Kent Newland, who seemed to be very knowledgeable about desert plants. In a note announcing the next meeting at the Chesters', Henry wrote:

"At last we are on our way! We have a name, have adopted a workable set of by-laws, and have elected officers for the coming year."

The first officers chosen were: President - Henry Triesler, Vice-President - Bob Moulis, Treasurer - Lew Bremner, Secretary - Frank Hennessey, and Affiliate Director - Warner Dodd.

In the same note, Henry wrote: "Everyone joining and paying his or her dues by July 1st shall be considered charter members." The following responded: Doris Boyce, Lew and Barcia Bremer, Margaret Caldwell, Bill and Martha Chester, Belle Cooper, Warner and Beverly Dodd, Hubert and Lucille Earle, J. Whitman Evans, Sharon Fairchild, Frank and Philomena Hennessey, John and Nevelyn Hopkins, Stanley Jones, Rod McGill, Bob and Elaine Moulis, Kent Newland, Chester and Genevieve Oppen, Robert and Clara Pribbenow, Lee and Frances Tolleson, and Henry Triesler.

A wonderful year followed with meetings at members' homes, each garden a revelation. Yes Henry and Bob, we were indeed on our way.

[Editor's Note: History does not record if Warner Dodd was finally allowed to smoke at that first meeting.]

#### SCHOOL DAYS by MARTHA PASSWATER.

Readin', ritin', 'n rithmetic? No - Pereskia, Opuntiae, 'n Cereeeae!  
Kent Newland has done a marvelous job in leading our first serious study of our fascinating cacti. The enormous amount of time and effort he has devoted to the programs is obvious. Between Kent and his "students", there is an ample supply of slides and live plants available for examination and study at each session.

Few would have the detailed knowledge of the subject to present it in the fashion that Kent has, and I'm sure we have all benefited from his great interest in the subject matter.

A big bouquet of flowers (cactus-type, natch!) to Kent with our heartfelt thanks.

#### PROFESSOR KENT AND THE CACTACEAE by LEE TOLLESON.

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY, STUDY GROUP #1  
A TAXONOMIC AND GENERIC RECOGNITION SURVEY OF THE CACTACEAE, OR  
EVERYTHING YOU HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CACTUS FAMILY BUT WERE  
AFRAID TO ASK

- I. THE CACTACEAE - WHO, WHAT, WHERE, HOW AND WHY
  - A. WHY - IN RELATION TO THE PLANT KINGDOM AND PLANT CLASSIFICATION
  - B. WHAT - IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND MORPHOLOGY
  - C. WHERE - LOCATION AND HABITATS
  - D. WHO - BOTANISTS AND WORKERS IN THE FIELD
  - E. HOW - BOTANICAL NOMENCLATURE IN REGARD TO THE CACTACEAE
- II. THE CACTACEAE - THE TRIBES, SUBTRIBES AND GENERA
  - A. TRIBE PERESKIEAE
  - B. TRIBE OPUNTIEAE
  - C. TRIBE CEREEAE

The above outline gives some idea of the scope of Kent Newland's series of classes, but it does not reflect the significant contribution Kent has made to us

who attended. He has, with freshness and enthusiasm, exposed us to a vast array of cacti and to the interesting data pertaining to origins of names, habitats, and descriptions of plants along with information on culture and miscellaneous comments about each. Kent is obviously a vast storehouse of knowledge on the subject of cacti.

It is obvious that Kent spent much time and energy in compiling the study notes and slides, and gathering and transporting live plants all the way from Superior. Having actual plants to examine as we study each genus makes each presentation more vivid and exciting. Each genus has also been generously illustrated with colorful slides, often showing the plants in glorious bloom.

Kent always encouraged participation and questions. His love of cacti, and his interest and enthusiasm for taxonomy, was contagious, and his background of knowledge and experience certainly qualify him as an expert.

It was a rewarding experience in itself and will continue (through our increased awareness) to enhance our enjoyment of the fabulous world of plants and to make each of us an active conservationist.

I am sure that I speak for everyone in the class when I say, "Thank you, Kent, for the pleasure and the knowledge you have given us. Well done!"

#### ON THE WATERING OF CACTI by LEWIS R. STEICHMAN.

I water my cacti in large pots on a 7 to 10 day schedule, but I also use a water meter (a good investment). Small pots need more water, every 3 to 5 days.

All my plants except seedlings are fed from March to June. With seedlings, I use a ten-cup coffee pot, filling it with warm water and a small amount of fertilizer (20-20-20 Peters). A MacDonalds' coffee spoon is the perfect size, one heaping spoonful per coffee pot of water. I feed every time I water for the first year of growth. Some say that I push my seedlings too fast, but the bigger they are, the quicker they can be transplanted into their own pots. I grow my seedlings in a mix of 2 parts #12 sand and 1 part gravel or granite chips to which I add 10 percent black Michigan peat.

On my older plants, I use 5-50-17 or 5-55-6 fertilizer. Both are good. One teaspoon per 5 gallons of water each month is a good dose. The pots are also leached once a month, but I let my plants rest during the hot and humid parts of July and August, a period of about 6 weeks. The plants are misted in the evening during this period, however, so they don't dry out completely. Watering plants at this time of the year may result in rotting.

I have a lath house and cover it with plastic from December to April, thus turning it into a greenhouse for winter. Some plants do need water during the winter rest period. I never let my winter temperature drop below 50° F. at night. Daytime temperatures are harder to control, but I do have an exhaust fan on the west side and a removable panel at the east end to move cool air through the house. If more cooling is needed, I remove the plastic from the door at the cool north end. That keeps daytime temperatures close to 80° F. My plants appear to do best at these temperatures.

#### OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS - 1977.

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 SECRETARY - Barcia Bremer  
 TREASURER - Lewis Bremer 3rd  
 AFFILIATE DIRECTOR - Warner J. Dodd

DIRECTOR - Rodney G. Engard  
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 LIBRARIAN - Elaine Moulis

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