

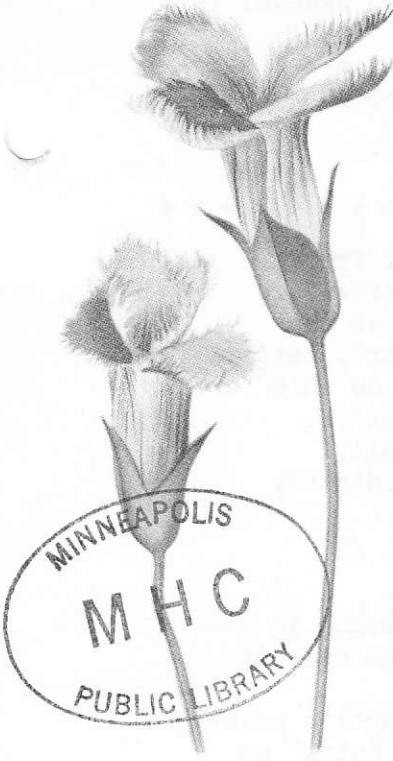
THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Vol. 26

JANUARY 1976

No. 1

"THANKS BE TO OUR EARLY PIONEERING SPIRITS"
---STATES "FRIENDS" PRESIDENT



Recently I watched a televised history of the great naturalist, John Muir. It told of a lifetime of struggle to save some of our country's beautiful, natural wonderlands. It was not easy. And I felt again the huge debt we all owe to those early, far-sighted pioneers of our park systems. They all understood in some measure how deeply man needs ready access to the natural environment. To trees, to flowers, to birdsong, and to the soft earth under foot. Minneapolis is richly blessed in this respect. Blessed first with Eloise Butler and Theodore Wirth. Blessed then with a government which provides us with a Park Board to watch over and preserve these assets for us. Blessed too, I would say, by our little group of "Friends" who have cared so deeply about our little corner of interest in the city. And how much our city dwellers need this asset is attested by the growing numbers of inner city groups who come daily--spring, summer, and fall--to walk the old paths, to listen, to absorb, and to learn.

How grateful I am for early memories of watching this Eloise Butler preserve develop! In the beginning it was an almost impenetrable bog and upland. But through the efforts of individual citizens it slowly opened up to accessible but protected public usage. And then, as now, it needed devoted private citizens to spark government interest.

So now I am sending out a plea to all of you interested members. To quote an earlier writer: "This organization is made up mostly of grey or greying heads." We need now a very real commitment to bring in some new, young, dedicated people who will carry on in the same spirit of guardianship that has sparked us all from the beginning. Please, won't you each try hard to bring in this year one or more young members. Because they and their children are the ones who will benefit most from now on.

As I write this the old year is drawing to a close. And so I want to extend my personal thanks to all of you dedicated volunteer workers--in whatever capacity you have served. Please know that you are all deeply appreciated--and needed.

With many good wishes for the new year,
Moana Odell Beim, President

MASTER FUTURIST TOO EXPRESSES NEED FOR WILDERNESS

Lately there has been a rash of articles concerning the fact that raising livestock is a wasteful method of producing food. The articles state that we are going to have to become vegetarians, since ten times more people can be fed directly than can be fed by routing the vegetation through livestock. This switch in agriculture will result in the liberation of gigantic areas of land.

The next paragraph was taken from "2001: An Earth Odyssey" by Arthur C. Clarke in Exclusively Yours Nov. 20, 1975

.....What are we going to do with this new land? I hope much will be allowed to revert to wilderness. We need wilderness badly, for psychological and physiological reasons.

Here is an interesting statistic: It takes 25 square feet of grass to regenerate the air for one human being. What are we doing to the life support system of our planet, "Spaceship Earth", with our parking lots and highways? For every 25 feet of grass that is plowed up, one less man can breathe.

"In Wilderness Is the Preservation of the World"....Henry David Thoreau

The Wild Flower Garden is our little piece of wilderness....

let's make certain that it is preserved.

We've had the feeling of the "now" expressed in the letter from Mrs. Beim, President of "The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden"... then we took a glimpse into the "future"--where again we saw the need for wilderness. So being that it's "Bicentennial Year", let's take a look over our shoulder at the "past"...I'd like to do this by reprinting a letter from the very first "Fringed Gentian"... written by the founder and first president, Clinton M. Odell, who, by the way, is the father of our present president...History repeating itself.

The President's Message...from "The Fringed Gentian", January 1953

This is the first issue of our Wild Flower Garden Publication - begun in a small, inexpensive way. Let no one be misled by it's size--good things come in small packages.

Martha Crone, our editor, is a talented writer, one of our Minneapolis newspapers several years ago ran a number of her contributions to "Museum Notes" on it's editorial page. She has been well received as a lecturer on wild flowers, having given over thirty talks, before various clubs and gatherings during the year just past, illustrated by beautiful kodachrome slides taken by her in the Wild Flower Garden. In addition to telling you about wild flowers and how to raise them, Mrs. Crone will write about birds visiting the garden.

You will find nothing herein about business or politics, war or sports--so in your home, read it by your fireside and become relaxed for a few minutes in an atmosphere of wild flowers, birds and Thoreausian beauty.

Clinton M. Odell, Pres.

a little Thoreausian beauty.....

from Henry David Thoreau

We need the tonic of wilderness, to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground. At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast and titanic features, the sea-coast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and its decaying trees, the thunder cloud and the rain which lasts three weeks and produces freshets. We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander.---Walden

DID YOU KNOW.....

....that Clinton M. Odell helped import the first pheasants into Minnesota? He was a great conservationist. As a student in Eloise Butler's botany class at Central High School he became interested and continued this interest in the Wild Flower Garden. He was closely associated with Miss. Butler. He hired workers to lay out the paths and fence in the garden. Although working closely together, Mr. Odell and Miss. Butler had one area of disagreement---she felt that everything that grew in the wild had a place in the garden (even poison ivy); he distinguished between wildflowers and what to him were weeds. Therefore, the story goes, they had this big argument as to whether they should or should not plant jewelweed. He hated it--she loved it--they argued--she won--she planted it. So for three years they argued about jewelweed while they watched it grow. And recorded in Mr. Odell's journals are his following yearly comments..."The first year the jewelweed marched through the bog"... "The second year it started up the hill"... "The third year it went up and over the hill, and something is darn well going to be done!" So workers were brought in again and they pulled jewelweed for days. Moana Beim, our present president, well remembers the garden as a girl and the many hours she spent helping her dad pull jewelweed.

DID YOU READ.....

....that birds need water in the winter not only for drinking purposes but also for bathing? If anything they need to bathe more often in cold weather. Birds bathe to keep warm! Their feathers need to be kept clean to provide the proper insulation for the rigors of the weather.

DID YOU SEE.....

...the "sundogs"..on January 8th..about ten o'clock in the morning? A sundog or parhelion, is a rainbow colored halo around the sun--rarely an entire circle, but usually a partial halo on opposite sides as these were. I made a quick call to the Mpls. Library Planetarium to ask what caused these sundogs (there were three) and received a very informative answer. Cirrus clouds, which are the highest clouds in the sky, have little ice crystals that act as prisms and cause the sundogs to appear. Same as the low clouds that carry water droplets and can cause rainbows when refracted by the sun. He said that amateur weather forecasters see a sundog and say "it's going to get colder". This I remember hearing as a child when I also last remember seeing sundogs. They usually occur during a cold snap. It was 18° degrees below zero that morning and by golly if it didn't get colder that night than it had been the previous night...a right forecast, eh?

DID YOU FEEL.....

....ill-at-ease?...when again reminded of the need...and asked to help find new members...and knew that you hadn't even tried, I did. Let's start the new year right and do something about it...NOW.

DID YOU REALIZE.....

....that we already have some new members? We're delighted to have you with us!

Mr. & Mrs. H. Robert Diercks
89 Woodland Circle Edina 55424

Edina Brook Garden Club
4800 Golf Terrace Edina 55424

Dr. & Mrs. Henry E. Hoffert
4624 Wooddale Ave. Edina 55424

Mr. & Mrs. Chester K. Stone
629 E. Minnehaha Pkwy. Mpls. 55417

Mr. & Mrs. Maurice H. Strothman Jr.
1916 West 21st St. Mpls. 55405

Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Warde
558 Lincoln Ave. St. Paul 55102

Miss. Patricia Crerar
12 River Terrace Court
Apt. 201
Minneapolis 55414

Welcome aboard....we'll see you in the Garden come spring.

CURATOR'S LETTER ANSWERS OFT ASKED QUESTION--"WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER?"

I have just been looking back through the articles that I have written for some of the past winter issues of the Gentian and I noticed that in January of 1974 I wrote that it was -30° that day and that the preceding few days were of that sort. Today was of that sort and so were the preceding days and the forecast is for it to continue in this vein for a day or two yet.

One of the most common questions I am asked is what those of us who work in the Garden do in the winter when there would seem to be little or nothing to do in the garden. First of all I must agree that there is very little to do in the garden at this time of year. There are a few routine chores such as filling the bird feeders. (We can't feed birds up to this time of scarcity and then abandon them until spring.) There are also occasional special tasks such as the removal of 60 Elms, dead due to Dutch Elm disease, that will occupy much of my time this winter. (It won't occupy much of Sam Baker's time since he is home with a broken arm that promises to relieve him of all occupations for about six weeks.) All in all in a typical year not much of my time is demanded by the Garden during the winter. So what do I do? My winter is somewhat divided into two parts. The second part, starting about the middle of February and lasting until I return to the Garden, is quite predictable. I, with the Rosearian and the other Park Board gardeners, work in the greenhouse starting the plants for next spring's park flower beds. We cut and plant the canna roots, we prick out (transplant) the tiny seedlings of petunia and celosia etc. into flats and in a few weeks into pots. We take cuttings from the aluminum plants and the coleus for edgings. We start all of the annuals and tender perennials you see in the Minneapolis parks during the summer.

That part of the winter preceding the 15th of February is much less predictable. Last year we helped count the trees in Minneapolis. (Did you know that all of the trees on public property were counted and catalogued last winter?) Some years we have pruned shrubs or apple trees along the parkways. These are the things we have done which I enjoy. We at times have had jobs which we didn't enjoy which might be hardly more than unskilled labor. This year I expect to work in the greenhouse until I go out to remove those dead elms and if there is any time left, I will return to the greenhouse until spring. I hope I will see you then.

Kenneth E. Avery, Curator

Eloise Butler Wildflower and Bird Sanctuary

Ken mentions keeping the bird feeders full during the winter, so I thought this poem quite fitting...it's by Bradley L. Morison in his book Breakfast Ballads

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FEEDING STATION

Come, children, gather 'round me now,
Stand near the window, please,
The suet and the seed are out,
Let's watch the chickadees.
What fun it is, when winter comes,
To feed our feathered cousins,
The nuthatch, junco, cardinal
And rare birds by the dozens.
Be quiet, children, do not stir,
Lest you should scare them, darlings,
Here come our little friends at last---
One cat, two squirrels, four starlings.

+++++

That's 30 for now. Thank you for bearing with me on my first time editing the "Gentian". It's been fun and I've learned many interesting things about the Garden and it's "Friends"..hope you have too. I don't know if you call it "recycling", but anyway I'm using the already printed up paper from the two previous editors...whose shoes, by the way, are going to be hard to fill. This is your newsletter, remember, so please let me know the type of news etc. that you want to read herein. Your Editor, Evie Chadbourn--1922 W. 49th St., Mpls., Mn.