

Conifer Quarterly

Vol. 22 No. 2

Spring 2005





Above: The endangered
Araucaria rulei



All photos this page by Daniel Luscombe

Right: The colorful, exfoliating
bark of a young kauri
(*Agathis australis*)

Below: Foliage of *Araucaria
angustifolia*

Read more about Daniel
Luscombe's trip to New
Zealand on pages 20-25.



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Cover photo: *Larix chinensis* with *Rhododendron purdomii*. Photo by Henrik Sjoman.
See page 32 for more about conifers from Taibai Mountain in China.

Conifer Quarterly

Spring 2005
Volume 22, No. 2

The *Conifer Quarterly* (ISSN 8755-0490) is published quarterly by the American Conifer Society. The Society is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is tax exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

You are invited to join our Society. Please address membership and other inquires to the Conifer Society National Office, P.O. Box 3422, Crofton, MD 21114-0422. Membership: US \$30 (basic), \$30 (institutional) \$50 (sustaining), \$100 (corporate/business) and \$130 (patron). If you are moving, please notify the National Office 4 weeks in advance.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I would like to publicly thank all the members of our board of directors and our contractors for the effort put forth to make the winter business meeting a success. Preparation on everyone's part made this arduous task constructive and efficient.

Our membership continues to grow and presently stands at about 1900 memberships, a number of which include more than one individual. The Society has been blessed with growth and success over the past several years. Despite the growth of our hobby, gardens and arboreta across the country have found their funding slashed or at risk as states attempt to meet their budgets. Our plan is to continue our efforts to make this Society educational, interesting, and friendly while working to support the arboreta associated with the Society.

The American Conifer Society Scholarship

You will find on page 42 information describing our new scholarship, which has been created to assist a student interested in horticulture, preferably related to the study of conifers. To qualify,

a student needs a Society member to sponsor his or her application. The applications will be reviewed, and those that qualify will be placed into a lottery. A subsequent drawing will give us a yearly winner. A special thanks goes to Gerald Kral, who formulated this idea into a functional event by writing the criteria, rules and regulations.

Our website continues to improve, including the conifer database which now includes over 1000 photos in over 4500 total records. Many thanks to **Bill Barger** and his efforts to support this critical aspect of the American Conifer Society. A new website committee has been formed, and we would like to add another member to serve on this committee as a technical advisor. This individual's main function would be to assist and advise Bill in some of the daily responsibilities of maintaining the site.

Conifer of the Year

The Conifer of the Year (COY) program is proceeding on schedule, and the plants have been approved for production. **Ridge Goodwin** has spearheaded this effort with excellent support from member growers in the Northwest. This complex program has required many hours and trips on Ridge's part. It required not only a considerable time commitment but also a vision of the end product and process. Needed support came from Randy and Rita Oster, Flo Chaffin, Larry Stanley, Don Howse and Talon Buchholz. Rita Oster developed the label design and Paul Halladin assisted with overall design of the project.

National Meeting

Throughout his work on the Conifer of the Year, Ridge has also contributed significantly to developing our upcoming National Meeting in the Philadelphia area this coming August. Ridge and **Barbara and Jim Smith** of Blue Sterling Nursery have created what appears to be a terrific meeting experience. The post-conference tour is also very exciting and should fill quickly. Please register as soon as possible, as it helps so much with the planning of these events.

Brochure and By-laws

The Society has completed a revision of the brochure "A Brief Look at Garden Conifers." This effort was undertaken by your past president, **Dennis Groh**, who did an outstanding job of "weighing the evidence" that needed to be presented in this very limited study of the conifer world. These brochures should be available through your regional representative, regional officers, or the Society's national office. For those of you participating in lecture programs, these are an excellent adjunct to your presentation.

This Spring, **John Martin** will begin an effort to review and update our by-laws. These recommended changes will then be reviewed by Dennis Groh and Frank Goodhart of the By-laws Committee and, once approved, will be presented to the membership for approval.

Spring is here – it's time to hit the yard!

As plant lovers, we tend to seek out travel destinations that we know will include opportunities to observe, photograph, collect or purchase the plants we admire. If we're passing through a new area, we try to find out which arboretum or specialty nursery might be worth a detour. We attend regional or national Conifer Society meetings because we know we'll see great gardens and maybe even take home a plant or two from the auction.

But we also notice our favorite plants when they grow in ordinary, everyday places. (Tip: there's a nice clump of *Cedrus libani* at a rest stop somewhere around Exit 7 of the New Jersey turnpike.) Sometimes these unscheduled surprises are more memorable than planned conifer encounters.

This issue of the *Conifer Quarterly* features a collection of travel tales from

members who may or may not have found what they were expecting. First, Maud Henne describes some conifers and their look-alikes at two gardens she stumbled upon while traveling between her Virginia home and the Society's winter board meeting in Orlando this past January.

Next, Flo Chaffin tells us about her trip to Oregon to visit several members' nurseries. According to Flo, the connections we can make with the other members of our Society are a greatly overlooked benefit of membership!

Beginning on page 20, Daniel Luscombe of the Bedgebury Pinetum in England takes us along on the first part of his adventure to New Zealand, where he was fortunate to see many of the Araucariaceae and other exotic conifers growing in their native habitat.

As Marjorie Lauer reports on page

28, the damage to *Abies fraseri* (Fraser fir) by the balsam wooly adelgid is impossible to ignore along the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina. A family vacation was tinged with melancholy as the group observed tree after tree that had fallen victim to the ongoing infestation.

Next we go to China with Sweden's Henrik Sjomán, who explains why some conifer species from China's mountains show great potential as landscape plants in Sweden and other regions. He also notes the broadleaf plants that grow in association with those conifers, as they can provide hints about the microclimate of a particular ecosystem.

Our final travel narrative brings us back to the US as Terri Park describes what happens when a young dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) is "topped" at four feet, as was done at Windmill Island in Michigan. She predicts this pruning technique might further broaden the appeal of an already trendy tree.

A new generation of conifer lovers?

They say that every person experiences "15 minutes of fame," and I had an experience recently that may qualify. As Editor of the *CQ*, I was contacted last year by one of the members of the band called They Might Be Giants. (If you haven't heard of them, ask a twenty- or thirty-something relative or neighbor – a math or physics major if possible.) They were writing a song called "C is for Conifer" for their upcoming educational album for kids, and they wanted to run the lyrics past me to make sure they "had their facts right" concerning some basic

Companion plants to highlight Summer issue

In July, we'll explore the age-old question, "Who is a conifer's best friend?"

Do hostas hang out with your hemlocks? Does *Campanula* keep your *Chamaecyparis* company? Send us a picture and inspire our readers to try a new garden combination. Submissions are due by May 10th.

Fall issue: Focus on Propagation

No sooner do we start growing and collecting conifers than we want to make more to give away or sell. What propagation questions – or solutions – do you have to share with our other members? Photos are also important for this topic. Contact the Editor by August 12th.

conifer anatomy and a few common names. He was fascinated to learn that the California redwoods are conifers, as are many bonsai. While the final song, which is now available on the CD/DVD called *Here Come the ABC's*, might not entirely pass muster with our technical editors, it's a catchy tune that should give a few three-year-olds a head start in conifer appreciation!

Anne

Publication Dates

Issue	Calendar Quarter	Deadline to submit articles	Publication Date (approx. mailing)
Winter	Jan/Feb/Mar	Nov 7	Jan 15
Spring	Apr/May/June	Feb 6	Apr 15
Summer	Jul/Aug/Sept	May 10	July 15
Fall	Oct/Nov/Dec 31	Aug 12	Oct 15

Submit articles/photos to:

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 FAX (215) 827-5926 • E-mail: ConiferQuarterly@contextcomm.com

Spelling of cultivar 'Du Flon'

Don Howse gave a very interesting description and history of *Abies lasiocarpa* 'Du Flon' in the Winter 2005 issue of the *Conifer Quarterly*. Alton Du Flon spells his name slightly differently than Don does.

Names are important to us and I want to set the record straight. Bitu died a couple of years ago but Alton is still a member of the Northwestern Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, for which my wife and I keep the member records. I have seen the way that Alton prefers to spell his name. If you buy this small conifer from the Kruckeberg Nursery in North Seattle it is *Abies lasiocarpa* 'Du Flon.' Art Kruckeberg and Alton Du Flon are long time friends and early members of the Northwestern Chapter.

Dan Montague
Olympia, Washington

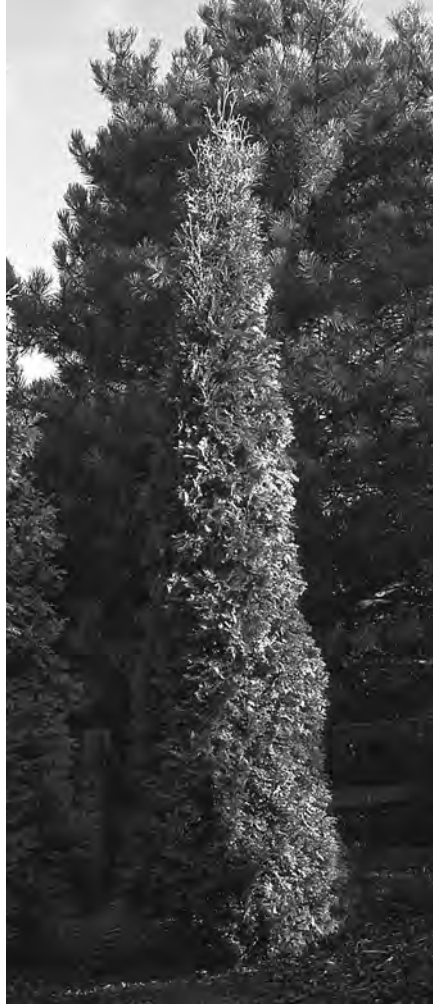
***Thuja occidentalis* 'Hood River Cemetery'**

On page 22 of the Fall 2004 issue, Charlene Harris wrote:

Among our narrowest arborvitae is a 15-foot (4.5-m) tall and 32-inch (80-cm) wide *T. occidentalis* 'Hood

Thuja occidentalis 'Hood River Cemetery' photographed by Charlene Harris in her Michigan garden.

River Cemetery' purchased as a one-gallon plant at a Conifer Society meeting auction. It is growing at about 12-14 inches (30-35 cm) per year as part of the south barrier border. We would like to know where this plant originated; if someone could tell us we'd be



Charlene Harris

thankful. It is now a stately specimen rivaling our *T. occidentalis* 'Malonyana' but with denser foliage. It maintains this dark green color through all seasons and is a great complement to the gold 'Lutea' nearby.

Paul Surian responds:

I believe I have an answer for you about the origin of *T. occidentalis* 'Hood River Cemetery.' We grow that here at Wavecrest Nursery. Carol's dad, Bob Tomayer, collected it on one of his many trips to Oregon. He spotted it growing in a cemetery near Mt. Hood and appreciated it for its nice color and fastigate form. What a surprise to see it mentioned in the *Conifer Quarterly*!

I'm glad you like the plant!


Paul Surian
Wavecrest Nursery
Fennville, Michigan

Pollen Request

Our member Kurt Wittboldt-Mueller in Germany is interested in obtaining pollen of *Abies lasiocarpa* 'Gluca Arizona.' He can be contacted by phone: 011-49-4231-61077 or by fax 011-49-4231-63895. His address: Weitzmuehlener Strasse 59, 27283 Verden-Eitze, Germany.

Maud Henne
Charlottesville, Virginia

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Sidney Waxman

Sidney Waxman, a longtime American Conifer Society member and recipient of the Society's Award of Merit, died February 10, 2005, at his home in Storrs, Connecticut. He leaves his wife of 57 years, Florence Waxman, his daughter, Deborah, two sons, Howard and Paul, and two grandchildren.

His career included more than 40 years as Professor of Horticulture at the University of Connecticut where he managed the witches' broom nursery that he founded in 1957.

Dr. Waxman's accomplishments in horticulture are legendary. Countless students were introduced to the world of plant propagation through his teaching at the University. He published many articles on plant

A celebration of Dr. Waxman's life will be held June 11th at 2:00 PM at the Waxman Conifer Collection at the University of Connecticut.

RSVP to:
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Charlene Harris

Left: Dr. Sid Waxman and his wife, Florence, at the 1998 American Conifer Society National Meeting.



Ridge Goodwin

Right: Dr. Waxman in October 2004 at the grand opening of the Benenson Ornamental Conifer Collection at New York Botanical Garden.

propagation and received the Award of Merit from the Connecticut Nursery and Landscape Association and the International Plant Propagators' Society.

Dr. Waxman was known internationally for the 40-plus cultivars of trees he named. Most of them were derived from witches' brooms.

An extensive article by Frank Goodhart was published in the American Conifer Society's Fall 1998 *Bulletin*, shortly after Dr. Waxman received the Award of Merit for Development in the Field of Garden Conifers. This article includes details about his many cultivar introductions.

Despite his notoriety, Dr. Waxman remained a very kind and humble man. During his semi-retirement, he enjoyed

Joe Cesarini

Joe Cesarini died in December 2004.

Joe was an historic figure in the early days of conifer collecting when he lived out on Long Island, and there are a number of cultivars that are named for him or members of his family. His plant knowledge was said to be "encyclopedic." He later moved to the Eastern Shore of Maryland and started a successful wholesale nursery with his son, Gabe.

Joe was a true collector who at one point in his life became interested in collecting gold coins and, after many years, had probably collected all there were to collect! He then moved on to collecting Chinese export porcelains, filling his house with museum-quality examples.

It was perhaps fifteen or twenty years ago that Joe invited my wife,

who is a Park House Guide for the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and myself to lunch at his house. The lunch, which he had carefully prepared himself, was delicious, and the conversation was interesting and wide ranging. After lunch he delighted in showing us his porcelain collection, handing us each piece and describing it in great detail.

Later on in his life, he built a large house for himself and went on extensive buying tours of conifer nurseries on both coasts looking for specimens for his landscaping, and got very hot on the subject of conifers once again, bringing him almost full circle back to his earliest collecting passion.

– Ridge Goodwin



interacting with the students and the farm crew at the nursery and research farm.

As a sportsman, he loved to fish. Endeavors into other sports were met with varying degrees of success. He tried golf at a local country club, but he hit the clubhouse on his drive off the first tee. Later, he rebounded to capture the first

place ribbon in the Research Farm Bocce Tournament.

We will never forget the kindness and respect Dr. Waxman gave us freely as a plantsman, teacher and friend.

– Greg Tormey

Pines and Palmettos

Non-conifer "cones" attract attention at two Southeastern destinations

Text and photos by Maud Henne

This past January, the American Conifer Society's Board of Directors met in Orlando, Florida, rather than in chilly St. Louis, Missouri. In order to have time and opportunity to find and visit botanical gardens, I drove to Orlando from my home in central Virginia, covering about 860 miles (1380 km) each way.

One of my discoveries was **Harry P. Leu Gardens** in Orlando, a 50-acre (0.2 km²) garden estate on Lake Rowena that features towering moss-hung live oaks, camellias and azaleas. Under the canopy of trees, I found what appeared to be cones on a broadleaf plant. Though many

Curcuma sp., shown here at Harry P. Leu Gardens, is an ornamental ginger whose developing inflorescences look much like cones.



of the garden's plants were labeled, this one was not. A cone but no conifer? I took pictures and later requested help from Tom Cox, an expert on Southern plants. He identified this plant as one of the ornamental gingers from the species *Curcuma*. The *Southern Living Garden Book* lists a *Curcuma* with a cone-shaped



inflorescence as *C. alismatifolia* with a common name of Siam tulip.

During my visit to Leu Gardens, I also spotted a large "cone" on a plant that looked like a palm tree. It was actually a cycad (*Cycas* sp.) commonly known as sago palm. The botanical literature points out that these primitive evergreen plants date back to the Jurassic and are more closely related to *Ginkgo* and *Pinus* than to palm trees.

Next, a tree with soft juniper-like foliage drew my attention. Junipers always interest me, and I am especially fond of *Juniperus virginiana* (**Eastern red-cedar**), which is native to my home state of Virginia and grows wild in pastures and on roadsides there, but does not thrive in Florida. The tree in Leu Gardens had soft, fine foliage, not the

The foliage and cone-like structure on this sago palm may resemble those of a conifer, but it is actually a cycad.



prickly leaves of the *J. virginiana*, and the crown was rounded and open (see photo on back cover). According to the label, this was *Juniperus silicicola* (**Southern red-cedar**).

*Under the canopy of trees,
I found what appeared
to be cones on a
broadleaf plant*

I also visited **Audubon Newhall Nature Preserve** on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, which is just north of historic Savannah, Georgia, on the Atlantic coast. This 50-acre (0.2 km²) preserve was created in 1965 and is mostly woodland and marshland surrounding a pond. It might be summarized by two words: pines and palmettos.

One of the eight designated trail areas is called Pine Flats, though the pines themselves tower over visitors. As

the excellent, illustrated eight-page *Trail Guide* explains, so many pines grow throughout the Preserve that their dropping needles create an eerie effect as they catch and hang in other trees and shrubs. They provide natural mulch and – as they slowly decompose – create a highly acidic soil that determines what types of plants may grow there.

The *Trail Guide* lists four species of pines in the Preserve:

Longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) is the giant of the drier ridges with an ultimate height of up to 120 feet (37 m). It is named for the long 10- to 15-inch (30- to 38-cm) needles which appear in bundles of three. The cones grow to 10 inches (25 cm) long, and I happened to find and photograph one (see page 14). I had known *P. palustris* before and had even planted and raised

one on my waterfront property in the Chesapeake Bay area. I like them best during their young “grassy” stage when their long needles are especially striking on such small trees. As they mature, their appearance becomes somewhat straggly and loose. *Audubon* magazine reports that longleaf pine forests once covered 80 million acres (320,000 km²) in the southeastern United States and that, due to commercial use and development, only three percent of these vast forests remain. The species’ native habitat stretches from Virginia to Florida and west to Mississippi.

Below: *Juniperus silicicola*

Right: The Pine Flats at Audubon Newhall Nature Preserve



Loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*) can reach up to 100 feet (30 m) in height and is also known as bull pine or rosemary pine. The latter name refers to the tree's fragrant, resinous foliage. "Loblolly" is the Indian word for mud puddle, referring to the lowlands where these pines grow. Five- to nine-inch (13- to 23-cm) needles grow in clusters of three, and the tree produces three- to five-inch prickly cones. Native habitat: southern New Jersey to Florida to eastern Texas and Oklahoma.

Pond pine (*Pinus serotina*) grows in the wetter parts of the Preserve, as suggested by its name. It reaches heights between 25 and 40 feet (8-12 m), has six- to eight-inch (15- to 20-cm) needles and two-inch (5-cm) acorn-shaped cones that sprout directly from the bark. Native habitat: North Carolina to Florida, mostly on moist sites and swampy areas.

Slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), according to the *Trail Guide*, is often mistaken for loblolly or longleaf pine. It produces stiff needles up to one foot (30 cm) long in clusters of two and three on the same tree, and the shiny brown cones are 3.5 to 6 inches (9 to 15 cm) long. I was delighted to find branches on the ground and confirm the two- and three-needle arrangement for myself, as well as observe the bluish-purple inflorescences (see photo inside back cover). At one time, this species was used extensively for the production of turpentine, tar and pitch, but now it is mostly grown as shade tree and for pulp and lumber. Native habitat: Coastal Plains, South Carolina to Louisiana.



Top: Cone of *Pinus palustris*

Bottom: Cones of *Pinus serotina*

The *Trail Guide* explains that this ecosystem will eventually shift from pines to oaks – mostly live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*) – due to the lack of sun on the ground and the increasing soil acidity that hampers the development of pine seedlings. Other conifers within the Preserve include **bald cypress** (*Taxodium distichum*), which were leafless during my winter visit, and **Southern red-cedar** (*Juniperus silicicola*) which I described above at Leu Gardens.

In my opinion, the Audubon Newhall Nature Preserve is the jewel of the 12-mile (20-km) long Hilton Head Island, where manicured residential and commercial developments leave little else for the nature lover.

Driving north on Interstate 95, I passed Fayetteville, North Carolina, but did not stop to visit Cape Fear Botanical Garden on this trip. I did notice along the roadsides a gradual change from pure stands of pines to a mostly hardwood ecosystem.

As much as I enjoyed and learned from my visits with the native pines, I was glad to get back home and look at my collection of exotic pines with their diverse growth habits and colors that are so valuable in a garden setting. ▲

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 Bender, Steve (ed.). 2004. *The Southern Living Garden Book*. 2004. Oxmoor House, Inc.
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About the author: Maud Henne has been a member of the Society since 1985 and maintains her late husband's conifer collection, now numbering about 300 plants, at her residence in Charlottesville, Virginia, near Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. She managed the ACS National Office from 1996 to 2000, served as secretary/treasurer of the Southeastern Region from 2002 to 2004, and became president of that Region in October 2004.

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Pilgrimage to Portland

Visits to renowned conifer nurseries in Oregon inspire this member from Georgia

Photos and text by Flo Chaffin

Conifers are grown well and displayed beautifully all over the world. But in the US, the greater Portland area is well known for some of the finest nurseries and conifer displays. Since I joined the American Conifer Society, it has been a dream of mine to see some of these fantastic sites. The dream came true this past December.

Thanks to Rita and Randy Oster, our four-day schedule was packed with exciting tours well before Joe and I arrived. After a quick glimpse of sooty Mount St. Helens, we were off to the hills of the Cascades to tour the Porterhowse Collection – the gardens and arboretum of Don Howse. So many plants, so little time and not enough brain cells! Among the most memorable plants was *Abies georgii*, which I've grown in my trial beds in Georgia. Also, *Cupressus glabra* 'Chapparral' has a magnificent color and habit and should do well in the Southeast. The yellow-leaved pines, including *Pinus virginiana* 'Wates Golden' (see photo inside back cover), were attention grabbers, as was the golden spruce *Picea abies* 'Goldkist.'

The next day we were up early at R&R nursery. Randy and Rita run a first-class operation and gave us a detailed tour of their expanding opera-

tions, including a grafting lesson for my husband Joe. R&R has been helping me with a program to test more *Abies* species in the Southeast that have been grafted onto *Abies firma* understock. We already have a small first batch out

in trial gardens and look forward to getting some into production next year.

After Joe got his grafting technique down, we headed to The Oregon Garden.

This fabulous and relatively new garden was started by the Oregon Association of Nurseries, but is now owned by the Oregon Garden Foundation. Clearly the Conifer Garden there – donated and maintained by many of the conifer nurseries in the area – is the showpiece of the garden. It is a bit off the beaten path but well worth a visit. We were off to Jeddelloh Farms next to tour their field nursery that included new cultivars from Germany. We were also treated to a lively afternoon gathering with Horst and Linda Jeddelloh along with Brian Jacob from Monrovia.

The next day found us heading to west Portland to Buchholz Nursery. Talon Buchholz gave us a personal tour of his display gardens and production areas, and he answered our questions about hot callus tube grafting, Japanese maple grafting, and rooting cuttings. It

It was a real treat for me to put a face with the name on all those little liners I've been ordering for years

was a real treat for me to put a face with the name on all those little liners I've been ordering for years, and to see the big plants that result!

After leaving Buchholz, we met Brian at Monrovia to tour there. What an operation! From propagation to soil mixing, fertilization, or pruning, it was a look at automation and productivity not often associated with living products. Monrovia in Oregon grows many different types of plants, but all with the

same precision.

We visited Iseli Nursery the next morning, with bonsai master and Japanese maple supervisor Joe Harris as our tour leader. We saw fabulous specimen maples, the remaining Bonsai collection, brand new conifers, cutting and grafting production, field grown conifers, pot grown conifers (see photo inside back cover), specimen conifers, and the famous "Mobius Strip" of sculptural *Cedrus deodara* 'Aurea.'

Last on our schedule, but certainly not least, was Stanley and Sons, complete with magnificent specimens, new and promising baby plants, and a tour by "Mr. Excitement" himself, Larry Stanley.

For a conifer fan, this was truly a dream trip. But we also found time for a jazz concert and wine tasting at an Oregon vineyard, sight-seeing along our routes to and from venues, and some fabulous dining experiences.

When I first joined the Society, it was my intention to learn more about this fine group of plants. What I am beginning to realize is how much more valuable this membership can be. By getting involved in the organization I've met wonderful, fun, generous people. I've learned so much, and I see how much more there is to learn. I've made personal and business connections that I consider priceless.



Cupressus glabra 'Chapparral' (above) and *Abies georgii* at Porterhowse Farms.





The Oregon Garden

What can your ACS membership do for you? I'd like to encourage you to get involved, go to meetings, volunteer, visit a garden, make a phone call, plan a get-together in your area. I can't promise you the trip of a lifetime, but I can assure you that a little effort will bring great rewards. ▲

About the author: Flo Chaffin has a small wholesale woody plant nursery in Watkinsville, Georgia. They propagate and grow many different trees and shrubs, with a growing emphasis on conifer evaluation and cultivation for the Southeast. She currently serves on the Society's Board of Directors and is actively promoting both conifer use and ACS membership in Georgia.

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van Hoey Smith Acknowledges Award of Merit

The following excerpts were taken from J.R.P. van Hoey Smith's acceptance speech after receiving the Award of Merit for Development in the Field of Conifers. The award was presented on August 14, 2005, at Iseli Nursery during the Dutch Conifer Society's visit.

In the first place, I wish to thank the Conifer Society and also Iseli Nursery for organizing this event in such an exuberant way.

Dendrology is a marvelous way to enjoy life, and this hobby for me has involved much traveling and making friends all over the world. I am a true amateur whose normal work was in shipping and distribution.

However, when I was eight, I received from my grandmother two cacti, which I have taken care of for 75 years and which have flowered every year since. This started my commitment to plants that continued as I served on the board of the German Dendrology Society and as a co-founder of the International Dendrology Society.

The Laurens Medal was my first award. It has an inscription in Latin: "*Ardens ipsa fides alios incendit in ignem*," which means, "By burning himself, he lit the fire in others."

My second award was the Veitch Memorial Medal in Gold for my knowledge and development of oaks.

And now, this great honor!

Dendrology involves much sowing, hybridizing and selecting. You see my best selection ever at my right side – my wife, who gave me a son and two fan-

tastic daughters. Moreover, she helped and supported me in all my hobbies.

An example of a man who selected plants all his life is Captain Collingwood Ingram. Serving in the British Indian Army, he was pensioned at an early age and wrote his friend Williams of Caerhays Castle in Cornwall asking his advice about what to do next. The answer: "You should start crossing rhododendrons. It is the greatest fun – you have 10, 15 or 20 years of joyful anticipation and only one day of disappointment – the day they open their first flowers!"

My health is letting me down, but at Crater Lake I bought a little plank with the following saying:

"Why worry? You are either in good health or not. If you are well, there is nothing to worry about. If you are sick, there are only two things to worry about. Either you will get well or you will die. If you get well, there is nothing to worry about. If you die, there are only two things to worry about. Either you will go to Heaven or to Hell. If you go to Heaven, there is nothing to worry about. But if you go to Hell, you will be so damn busy shaking hands with friends, you won't have time to worry!"

Let me finish with a saying from the great reformer Maarten Luther: "If I know I will die tomorrow, today I will plant a tree!"

Once more, I am most grateful for all you have done for me.

– J.R.P. van Hoey Smith

Visiting the Conifers of New Zealand, Part 1

Kauri and other native plants highlighted this extensive trip

Photos and text by Daniel Luscombe

In March and April of 2002, I traveled to New Zealand to attend the Araucariaceae Symposium and took additional field trips to Northland and New Caledonia. I also spent ten days traveling around New Zealand collecting seeds of native conifers to enhance the collection at Bedgebury National Pine-tum, where I work. The trip was financed by the Friends of Bedgebury, to whom I am very grateful. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who were involved in organizing and running the trip – it was absolutely superb.

The following descriptions are excerpts from my travel diary, and I hope you enjoy reading it.

The Northland Tour

The tour started by crossing the Auckland Harbour Bridge and passing extensive communities of mangroves (*Avicennia marina* var. *australasica*). The first stop of the day was the Alice Eaves Scenic Reserve, which is comprised of 40 acres (0.2 km²) of native mixed coastal forest and kauri (*Agathis australis*). This was the first time I had seen the kauris in the wild and was

The tallest kauri (*Agathis australis*) is named Tane Mahuta, which means “lord of the forest.”

amazed to see the different colors of the bark (see photo inside front cover). The kauris don’t grow as pure forests; they are components of a complex ecosystem that includes *Podocarpus hallii*, *Phyllocladus trichomanoides* and *Dacrydium dacrydioides* as conifer elements.

Next we caught a ferry to Kawau Island, which is famous for the various plants and animals introduced by Governor Sir George Grey in the late 1800s. The mansion house is the first thing you see as you get off the ferry, and two huge *Araucaria* trees stand behind it. The cli-



mate of the island is very favorable, and the diverse range of plants includes English oak, sycamore, Australian fan palm (*Livingstonia australis*) and a superb Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*).

On returning to Sandspit, we continued north up the Kauri Coast road, stopping briefly to see a hillside covered in regenerating kauri forest. We lunched at Pahi on the shore of Kaipara Harbour beside New Zealand’s largest specimen of Moreton Bay fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) where we could admire its bizarre roots.

The Kauri Museum was our final stop of a very busy day, and we spent the night in the Great Northern Hotel in Dargaville.

On the second day, we focused on the natural kauri forests and their associated plant species. Trounson Kauri Park’s 1100 acres (4.5 km²) gave us our first opportunity to see a mature kauri forest in all its glory. We followed a boardwalk through the dark forest, which is filled with understory vegetation. You might be standing next to one of the giant kauris and not even notice. Though they are massive, these trees grow very straight and the lowest branches are located above the primary canopy. One is only aware of massive columns disappearing skyward.

The bark of the mature trees is amazing; there are many different colors peeling off in flakes, similar to eucalyptus. Each of the big trees is host to many different epiphytes, giving the impression of a garden growing 100 feet (30 m) above one’s head. Many types of ferns, mosses, palms and native trees exist in this kauri forest ecosystem. We all left feeling humbled by these giant trees.

Adjacent to Trounson is the best-known kauri plantation in New Zealand, planted in 1955-1960 as a reforestation project.

At the conservation center at Waipoua, we visited an old seed orchard of grafted kauri – a rare chance to see the cones at eye level, as they are usually located at the tops of mature trees. Mature growth from adult trees was grafted

You might be standing next to one of the giant kauris and not even notice ... One is only aware of massive columns disappearing skyward

onto young rootstocks to produce cones on small trees. A short drive away, we got to see the rarest of the New Zealand conifers, *Halocarpus kirkii*, and a mature *Phyllocladus trichomanoides*.

The highlight of the day was the walk around Cathedral Grove, where the biggest and oldest of the kauris grow. Estimated to be 1500 years old, the tree named Tane Mahuta – “Lord of the Forest” – is the tallest at 169 feet (16 m), and another named Te Matua Ngahere – “Father of the Forest” – has the largest girth at 59 feet (5.5 m) in circumference. These trees were so big it was difficult to believe our eyes!

After spending the night on the shore of Hokianga Harbour, we began the next day by visiting an old mission station in Waimate North that was built from kauri wood. Several notable trees growing nearby included *Araucaria bidwillii*,

Podocarpus totara, and a *Libocedrus plumosa* with a massive staghorn fern growing on its trunk. *Araucaria bidwillii* produces the largest cones of all the conifers, weighing up to 27 pounds (10 kg)!

At Kerikeri in the Bay of Islands, we visited a subtropical nursery that offered lots of weird and wonderful plants (none of which would grow in England). My particular favorite was the dinner-plate fig (*Ficus dammaropsis*).

We stopped for lunch at Waitangi and visited its historic treaty house before taking the ferry over to Russell, the first capital of New Zealand. Our accommodation for the night was on the

On our way to Mair Park, we traveled through stonewall country, named for the miles of stone walls built of basalt rock by the early settlers. Mair Park's vegetation is an example of coastal mixed forest whose conifers include kauri, *Podocarpus totara*, *Dacrydium cupressinum*, *Phyllocladus trichomanoides* and *Prumnopitys taxifolia*.

After a picnic lunch, we visited the fernery and conservatory maintained by Whangarei City Council and proceeded on to the Clarke Homestead. There we saw excellent examples of Cook pine (*Araucaria cunninghamia*), Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*) and *Araucaria columnaris*. The final stop of our four-day trip was a visit to the finest example of *Araucaria angustifolia* in the Auckland region (see foliage detail inside front cover).

The Araucariaceae Symposium – March 14-17, 2002

The four-day symposium was held in Auckland and was organized by the International Dendrology Society to coincide with its 50th anniversary. Their objectives were to create a forum where leading authorities on Araucariaceae could meet to review the current level of understanding of all aspects of the family, and to stimulate further interest and research.

Experts in the field presented papers on many aspects of the family, including detailed botanical descriptions, precise distribution of particular species, climatic tolerance, soil types, and conservation strategies. In addition, a guided tour was organized to show us the amazing cultivated specimens of Araucariaceae planted in the city.

City of Auckland Parks and Garden Tour

The day's first stop was Mission Bay, where we saw some of the original plantings of the Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*). This species is one of the most visible and easily recognized trees in Auckland, and thousands have been planted as street trees and in parks and gardens. The other plant of note was the New Zealand

Thousands of Norfolk Island pines have been planted as street trees and in parks and gardens

Christmas tree (*Metrosideros excelsa*), which marks the start of the Christmas season by producing a blaze of red flowers. Mission Bay is famous for its view out across Waitemata Harbour and Rangitoto Island, an extinct volcano.

Our drive through the leafy suburbs took us next to St John's Theological College. Wood from the northern kauri forests was used to build this building, and the grounds featured some superb trees including *Cupressus macrocarpa*, *Quercus robur*, *Quercus ilex*, *Quercus suber*, *Magnolia grandiflora*, *Liquidambar styraciflua*, *Pinus radiata*, *Phoenix canariensis* and *Araucaria araucana*. Many of these grow in parks and gardens in the UK as well. Before leaving the college, we planted a commemorative tree to mark our visit.

Next we visited Auckland Domain, one of the most popular parks in the city. There are many notable specimens of the Araucariaceae planted here, includ-

ing *Araucaria heterophylla*, *Agathis australis*, *Agathis robusta*, *Agathis lanceolata*, *Agathis macrophyllus*, and the only naturally regenerating grove of *Araucaria bidwillii* outside of its native Australia. After leaving the Domain, we stopped at one of only four monkey-puzzle trees (*Araucaria araucana*) recorded in Auckland.

The Governor General of New Zealand had kindly given us permission to visit the Government House Gardens. As this garden is located in a busy part of the city, it was unexpectedly quiet. There was a magnificent stand of mature Norfolk Island pines, and other trees of interest included *Afrocarpus falcata*, *Agathis australis*, *Davidia involucreta*, *Cedrus deodara*, *Acacia melanoxylon*, and *Jacaranda mimosifolia*.

We had lunch on the grounds of Eden Garden, which only forty years ago was an unsightly quarry. The garden was started and is maintained by a staff of dedicated volunteers. Here I saw *Vireya* rhododendrons, *Phyllocladus trichomanoides*, camellias, magnolias and a beautiful *Cupressus cashmeriana*. After lunch we visited Pines Apartments, a private garden serving a block of luxury city apartments. There were some large Araucariaceae in the garden, but the most interesting tree was a *Podocarpus gracilior* nearby.

No trip to Auckland would be complete without visiting Mt Eden, our next stop. From the summit, one can look across the whole of the city and see into the crater of an extinct volcano. Then we took a quick walk around Cornwall Park before heading to Monte Cecilia Park. Most of the big trees there originate from the 1870's, including a magnificent



A kauri cone observed on a grafted plant at the conservation center at Waipoua

Whangarei Coast overlooking the sea.

On the following day, we visited a commercial kauri planting at Glenbervie Forest. This is quite rare, we learned, as the trees grow too slowly to be commercially viable in most situations. *Pinus radiata* is the more common timber tree because it can be harvested in about 20 years.

Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*), *Callitris macleayana* and an *Araucaria bidwillii* covered with massive cones.

The best had been saved until last. Bev McConnell, one of the local members of the IDS, invited our group to her home and garden for a buffet dinner. Bev has designed the garden to include water features, herbaceous plants, trees, shrubs and lots of other exotics. One culinary feature was the opportunity to try roasted *Araucaria* nuts from the Bunya Mountains in Australia; the natives regarded them as a delicacy, though after tasting them I was not sure why. We all chatted about our experiences late into the night to end a truly great day.

New Caledonia

As we flew out of Auckland, we had a bird's eye view of the kauri forest that we had walked in a few days ago. Near New Caledonia, the sea suddenly became a turquoise blue and we could see the amazing coral reefs and hundreds of tiny islands.

We arrived late in the afternoon, so we only had time for one stop between the airport and the hotel. We visited a sawmill near Petit-Couli that included cultivated stands of *Agathis moorei*. We wouldn't be able to see this tree in the wild, so this was the next best thing.

Our accommodations that night resembled a beach hut more than a hotel, but it had all the basic requirements. Small screaming lizards and the sultry weather made it difficult to sleep.

The next morning I headed down to the beach, but despite the scenery, I couldn't wait to get out and see some conifers in the wild. We heard that there

was a good stand of *Araucaria luxurians* a short drive away; this turned out to be a massive understatement. Tucked into a fold in the hillside by the beach stood superb, towering, columnar trees. Growing with them were cycads (*Cycas seemannii*) and screw pine (*Pandanus altissimus*). The beach is named Turtle Beach in reference to the turtles that lay their eggs there. It was interesting to note that, although there were large trees and many seedlings, there were no medium or small trees. This species is listed as endangered, and there are no other stands for miles around.

From here we headed back to Petit-Couli, stopping briefly at a local hut surrounded by planted *Araucaria luxurians*. This was sacred ground and we had to ask permission from the local chief before we could enter. He also charged each person a fee for the privilege.

The aim of the day was to follow a particular road around the center of the island and make several stops along the way to look at trees. One highlight was a visit to a wild stand of the endangered *Araucaria rulei* scattered across the tops of a few hills – one of the biggest populations of them in the world. The trees were sparsely branched and held their foliage upright, and with their white bark they looked unreal against the blue sky (see photo inside front cover). None of the trees had any cones, but there were many seedlings present, so there is some hope.

One of the best views in the world turned into one of the worst as we reached the crest of the hill. Stretching out to the horizon, the entire area before us had been destroyed by mining.

We drove north from Bourail to the Kopeto B2 mine the next day. The own-

ers had kindly allowed us access to the stands of trees growing on their land; this was probably the first time they had allowed botanists onto their land so we considered it a privilege. In one place, there was a small patch of forest with *Araucaria montana*, *Falcatifolium taxoides*, *Podocarpus sylvestris*, *Nepenthes* sp., *Gymnostoma* sp., members of Winteraceae, and various palms and tree ferns. It was strange that in the middle of all of the mining, small patches of flora were hanging on for dear life. Many plants were growing out of what looked like solid rock.

Noumea, the capital, would be our base for the rest of the trip. The first stop on the way down was Mont Do. Our buses could not travel up the steep narrow road, so the organizers got a couple of 4x4s to ferry us up. Sitting in the back with several-hundred-foot vertical drops alongside the road was great fun first thing in the morning.

All of a sudden, we turned a corner



Araucaria laubenfelsii

and were facing a whole hillside covered in *Araucaria montana*, *A. biramulata* and *A. laubenfelsii*. These three species are so similar that no one could really tell which was which. The mist had just started to roll in and we hoped to get some great photos. At the top were young trees of *A. laubenfelsii*, and we took photos of David de Laubenfels with the tree that was named in his honor. Our guides noted how lucky we were to have dry weather, because when it rains the roads are very dangerous; our luck ran out when a torrential downpour began, making the journey back down terrifying. ▲

Part 2 of Dan's adventure will appear in the Summer issue of the Conifer Quarterly.

About the author: Daniel Luscombe is the assistant curator at Bedgebury National Pinetum in Kent, England, as well as a founding member and current secretary of the British Conifer Society.

Because of his interest in species conifers and their conservation, he has traveled to New Zealand, New Caledonia, South Africa, Australia, Spain and Tasmania looking at species in the wild, especially those that have potential as garden conifers in the UK.

Conifers in the News

Compiled by Tony Green

Climbing the Redwoods

The 80th Anniversary issue of the *New Yorker* (Feb. 14th & 21st, 2005) carried an article entitled "Climbing the Redwoods," a profile of botanist Stephen Sillett of Humboldt State University, who studies the biology of redwood canopies. Because the lowest branches of these trees start at over 200 feet (60 m), the only practical way to study the canopy is to climb the tree. (The National Park Service permits researchers to climb the trees only between September and January.)

As the title of the article suggests, much space was devoted to the challenge of climbing the trees without harming them, including detailed descriptions of the techniques and equipment. Climbers use soft boots and maintain only light pressure on limbs. The author himself, who had learned how to climb, was allowed to join Sillett in the canopy and report on the ecology firsthand.

Far from consisting only of the branches of the trees, the canopy is home to many epiphytes, including masses of leatherleaf ferns and a wide variety of lichens. Other plants include copepod and huckleberry bushes and some even larger plants: "Sillett has discovered small trees – wild bonsai – in the canopies. The species include California bay laurel trees, western hemlocks, Douglas firs, and tan oaks.

Sillett once found an eight-foot Sitka spruce growing on the limb of a giant redwood." The canopy soil to support this growth collects on branches and in crotches and is up to three feet deep.

Sillett has installed weather stations and bio probes in the trees. The article also mentions the work by Sillett's colleague, George Koch, who is studying how the trees lift water in an attempt to answer the question: How tall can a tree grow and why?

Washington Tree Damaged

The Washington Tree, named for our first President, is a giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) that stands in the Giant Forest section of Sequoia National Park. Until recently, the tree was the second largest (by volume) sequoia in the world, but now the tree faces an uncertain future. In January 2005, winter storms caused the crown of the tree, which had been weakened by fire in 2003, to collapse. Today, the remains of the tree stand only 115 feet (35 m) tall, down from 254 feet (77 m) before the fire. News of the collapse was reported by National Public Radio as well as our local paper, the Philadelphia Inquirer, in stories that ran in February.

Pacific Lumber Cutting More Redwoods

Humboldt County and its redwoods were in the news again in a story de-

scribing a conflict between Pacific Lumber and residents in two Humboldt County valleys, Elk River and Freshwater Creek. Pacific Lumber was seeking permits for logging and waste discharge in these valleys; the permits are opposed by residents who maintain that Pacific Lumber's aggressive logging has ruined the water and triggered landslides in the area. The company maintains that the silting of the creeks is due to "legacy logging."

When Pacific Lumber was taken over by Texas-based Maxxam Corporation in 1985, it doubled the rate of logging and instituted clearcutting. Over 65% of the 19 square mile area has been logged. Maxxam maintains that the increased logging is the only way to save jobs and stave off bankruptcy. The company has reported annual losses of \$100 million dollars, and has closed three mills.

The Water Board granted half the permits, leaving both sides of the dispute reportedly disappointed with the decision.

C is for Conifer

The musical group They Might Be Giants has released a CD/DVD for children called *Here Come the ABCs*. Among the selections are a number of songs that illustrate individual letters of the alphabet; the surprising and delightful choice for the letter C is called, "C is for Conifer." Editor Anne Brennan was consulted by the band in the production of this album. See the Editor's Memo on page 4. ▲



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A Distressing Discovery

Visible damage to Fraser fir by adelgids greets visitors to North Carolina

Photos and text by Marjorie Lauer

Every two years, my husband Ken and I get together with Ken's brother and sister-in-law. Since they live in Salt Lake City and we're in Pennsylvania, we alternate between eastern and western destinations. In September 2002, we all visited western North Carolina, staying on the outskirts of Asheville. Ken and I were especially eager to show our relatives the Blue

*On every ridge line
and all along the roads
stand bare and
gnarled trunks*

Ridge Parkway, with its miles of breathtaking views of the undulating blue hills fading into the distance.

We all arrived at Asheville on a Saturday afternoon. Sunday was devoted to a round of golf and a visit to Waynesville, supposedly an antiquing mecca, which appeared to be mostly closed for the day (or perhaps the season). Monday we visited Biltmore Estate – definitely a jewel among tourist attractions in Asheville – and we later spent some time driving around the downtown area to orient ourselves.

Tuesday we got on the Parkway, and drove northeast. We wanted to visit Mount Mitchell State Park and Grandfather Mountain, and then leave the

Parkway at Blowing Rock, “only” about 90 miles (140 km) away. As anyone familiar with the Parkway knows – though Ken and I had forgotten – 90 miles represents a minimum of three hours of driving, without allowing for traffic or stopping to take photographs. And you still have to get back to your point of origin.

It was a spectacular day, with perfect weather conditions. Early in the morning, the peaks of the mountains rose above the cottony banks of clouds, creating an impression of islands rising from a white sea. Later, the clouds cleared, and the vistas seemed endless. The mountain ash trees were in fruit and appeared very photogenic behind the split rail fences.

We left the Parkway to drive into Mount Mitchell State Park. Mount Mitchell itself, at altitude of 6,684 feet (2,037 m), is the highest peak east of the Mississippi River. Besides acres of forest, a rustic restaurant and a fine interpretive center, the Park unfortunately holds countless dead trees. On every ridge line and all along the roads stand bare and gnarled trunks, bleached from years of exposure to the sun.

We learned these were *Abies fraseri*, called Fraser fir or Southern balsam fir or she-balsam, depending on your source. When Frenchman Andre Michaux explored these mountains in 1787, he found what we now know as *Abies fraseri*

(named for Englishman John Fraser, who explored the region at about the same time) spread in rich, thick stands along the peaks, with *Picea rubens* and native rhododendrons and hardwoods growing below. Logging in the late 1800s and early 1900s, as well as fires, ice storms, high winds, old age and drought, destroyed much of the coniferous forest. No longer valuable as timber, the remaining stands of Fraser fir serve the important purpose of soil retention throughout the watershed. Although air pollution and acid precipitation may also contribute to the decline of the forest, the biggest threat today is from the balsam woolly adelgid.

First discovered in 1957 on Mount Mitchell, the balsam woolly adelgid has decimated millions of trees. The devastation, at least to our eyes, appears worse than what the hemlock woolly adelgid is doing to the Northeast's extensive stands of *Tsuga canadensis* (Canada hemlock). Perhaps the infestation is just more advanced.

According to the USDA Forest Ser-

vice's information (see reference below), “Further damage by other organisms is associated with attack by the balsam woolly adelgid. Weakened trees are often attacked by bark beetles, wood

*First discovered in 1957
on Mount Mitchell, the
balsam woolly adelgid has
decimated millions of trees*

wasps, and other wood-boring insects, which also may introduce fungal pathogens. Incidence of root rot caused by *Armillaria mellea* was shown to increase with increasing severity of adelgid damage. Damaged and weakened trees are also more susceptible to windthrow and top breakage.”

This publication continues, “Various chemical insecticides have been found effective against the balsam woolly adelgid, but none has been found techni-



cally or economically feasible for use over large forested areas. Chemical insecticides are useful, however, for small and accessible stands of high value. Control by a variety of introduced predators has been ineffective.”

Chemical insecticides are useful for small and accessible stands of high value

In our own experience at The Graver Arboretum, the use of Merit® as a soil drench has proved effective in preventing the larvae of hemlock woolly adelgid from hatching. Our consultant from Bartlett Tree Experts originally advised us to treat the trees every two years, but he now recommends treatment every third year instead. Also locally, Jacobs-

burg State Park has released several thousand Asian lady beetles (*Scymnus sinuanodulus*) in an effort to control further damage in their hemlock stands, but so far, they are unable to confirm significant success. Extremely cold weather also has contributed to the demise of the adelgid larvae.

Similar devastation was visible along the rest of our journey to Blowing Rock. During the remaining three days of our week, we visited the North Carolina Arboretum (where we especially enjoyed the bonsai collection) and Chimney Rock, high above Lake Lure.

While this was a wonderful vacation with our relatives from Utah, our most lasting memories, unfortunately, are of the irreparable damage to acres and acres of Southern balsam fir, and we often speak about it with distress. As conifer lovers, we seem to feel this loss like we would a death in the family. ▲



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About the author: Marjorie H. Lauer is Administrative Manager of The Graver Arboretum of Muhlenberg College, located in Bath, Pennsylvania. She and her husband Ken, who is Grounds Manager, have lived at the Arboretum for ten years.

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Conifers from China's Taibai Mountain

This region's native species show potential as landscape plants elsewhere

Photos and text by Henrik Sjöman

Here at the Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences in Alnarp, a research project concerning Chinese plants and vegetation is in progress. The main goal is to find new ways of using plants for Swedish and Scandinavian gardens and parks. By studying different plant systems, a deeper understanding will emerge and contribute to a more ecological way of designing our parks and gardens. This should promote a

The main goal is to find new ways of using plants for Swedish and Scandinavian gardens and parks.

long-term view of our gardens and ways in which we use and develop them.

The research team is also struggling to find and study systems and places in nature that offer similar growing conditions to those found in urban areas. These areas are often very challenging for landscapers, and new ideas and solutions are needed.

The two Chinese research areas are located in Qinling Mountains in the province of Shaanxi where the climate at higher altitudes is comparable to the Scandinavian climate. One of the areas is in Taibai National Park, where Mount Taibai at 12,360 feet (3767 m) is the

highest peak. The high altitude supports a wide range of vegetation types; conifers dominate at higher altitudes and lower terrains offer broadleaf forests with a large number of species. The primary advantage of this region to us is that a large part has been spared from logging and therefore offers a unique opportunity to study the natural development of an ecosystem of this kind.

Larix chinensis

At the highest altitudes grows the Taibai larch (*Larix chinensis*, now considered to be a variety of *L. potaninii*). The species is endemic to Taibai National Park and the surrounding mountain peaks and is found between 8800 and 11,800 feet (2700 and 3600 m) where the tree line occurs. It dominates above 9800 feet (3000 m) where it forms homogenous forests. The undergrowth varies according to growing conditions. On dry, south facing slopes, *Juniperus pingii* var. *wilsonii* and the small-leaved *Rhododendron capitatum* are found (see front cover photo). On more moist, northern-facing slopes, the pink-flowered *Rhododendron purdomii* dominates the undergrowth.

On the moist but exposed northern slopes, individual larch trees have more space to develop and become strongly shaped by the rough climate. On the more sheltered southern slopes, they grow into high, broad trees with rounded tops. At lower altitudes, the Taibai larch mainly

grows on slopes which they quickly colonize with *Betula utilis* and *Pinus armandii*. Below 9800 feet (3000 m), they only occur as scattered individuals.

The Taibai larch is, along with *Betula utilis*, a pioneer species in this ecosystem and is eventually replaced by the more shade tolerant *Abies fargesii*. The boundary areas between the larch forests and the darker *Abies* forests contain a very attractive mixture of species and expressions. Early in the succession, when the larch and birch dominate, *Rhododendron concinnum* dominates the undergrowth but is replaced by the more shade tolerant *Rhododendron clementinae* when *Abies fargesii* takes over.

Juniperus pingii var. *wilsonii* grows on dry, south-facing slopes in association with *Larix chinensis*.



Abies fargesii

Abies fargesii is found at altitudes between 6600 and 9800 feet (2000 and 3000 m) but is most dominant around 9200 feet (2800 m). There it forms an almost homogenous forest on moist northern slopes with deep soil. The fir is a typical secondary species as mentioned above. Like many other Asian fir species, *Abies fargesii* develop into beautiful, broad-spreading trees. It is hoped that this species will develop beautifully in Swedish parks and gardens as well. The natural zones where *Abies* grows together with other species serve as a model when designing and creating future natural plantings in urban areas.

Pinus armandii

At lower altitudes, the *Abies* dominance declines and they appear instead as scattered individuals. *Betula utilis* is re-

placed by the beautiful *Betula albosinensis*, which forms light forests together with the five-needle Chinese white pine, *Pinus armandii*. These beautiful forests are found at about 8500 feet (2600 m). The overall effect is very attractive with the orange stems of the birch trees contrasting with the pines' strong shapes. The shrub layer is dominated by the mountain bamboo, *Fargesia nitida*. In the herbaceous layer, pink-flowering *Paeonia veitchii* grows together with the blue-flowering *Corydalis curviflora*.

The Chinese white pine is a beautiful tree with soft bluish needles and a strong presence. It grows in deep, nutrient-rich soil as well as in warm, dry places together with drought-tolerant tree species such as *Quercus spinosa*, *Prunus davidiana* and *Juniperus squamata* (the latter developing into big trees with beautiful greyish trunks). On richer soil, the pine grows together with maples, ashes and oaks, demonstrating that this pine is tolerant of shade like many other five-needle pines.

At even lower altitudes below 6600 feet (2000 m), the vegetation comprises a diverse broadleaf forest, rich in species such as *Magnolia*, *Staphylea* and *Evodia*. Here, the white pine has difficulty competing with the other trees and is only found growing on drier and exposed sites.

Other Conifers

Other conifers in the national park include the Chinese plum yew (*Cephalotaxus fortunei*) and the Chinese yew (*Taxus chinensis*) which are both very shade tolerant. They are found in the dense and dark broadleaf forest at ap-

proximately 5200 feet (1600 m). The Chinese plum yew also grows at higher altitudes on drier sites, often alongside the Chinese white pine.

At the entrance to the national park at 2600 feet (800 m), the vegetation is strongly affected by many introduced species that have escaped and naturalized into the park. *Pinus tabulaeformis* and *Platycladus orientalis* (*Thuja orientalis*) have both been planted and thereafter escaped into the surrounding vegetation.

Platycladus orientalis grows naturally in a few very warm and exposed places on the rocky mountain slopes.

Landscape Laboratory

Many of the species mentioned in the text will be tested in Sweden at the university's research field known as the Landscape Laboratory. The species will also be planted to create special vegetation models using the knowledge that has been collected in the field in China. These vegetation models will, in the future, act as a reference for the plants added to our parks and gardens. ▲

About the author: Henrik Sjöman works in the Department of Landscape Planning at the Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences in Alnarp as a teacher and research assistant.



Abies fargesii

Dawn Redwood as a Shade Tree?

Topping Metasequoia produces a rounded crown

Photos and text by Terri Park

My husband Jay and I love going to Central Region meetings of the American Conifer Society because of the friends we've made and the wonderful garden ideas we always bring home. At the 2002 meeting in Holland, Michigan, we took an extra few days to take in some tourist stuff and went to Windmill Island. There, Jay noticed an extraordinary use of the dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*).

On each side of the sidewalk, 30-year-old dawn redwoods with rounded crowns were growing approximately 30 feet (9 m) tall by 40 feet (12 m) wide. This is not the tree's normal habit, but intentional topping of these two trees at about 4 feet (1.2 m) years ago had produced multiple branches at a 45-degree angle. The trees were not allowed to de-

velop a leader, so the lateral branches produced a beautiful round crown similar to that of a mature maple or oak.

The dawn redwood has many positive attributes. It is a fast-growing tree,

The lateral branches produced a beautiful round crown similar to that of a mature maple or oak

velop a leader, so the lateral branches produced a beautiful round crown similar to that of a mature maple or oak. yet it is strong and resistant to snow and ice damage because of its 45-degree lateral branching angle mentioned above. This deciduous conifer's leaves are even tinier than the popular honeylocust tree (*Gleditsia tricanthos*), so the leaves do not require raking in the fall. The rusty red bark color and peeling texture holds great winter interest. As the trees reach a dozen years old, the trunk begins to buttress and takes on a strong muscled look – which should be appealing in a health-conscious, “buff” new homeowner marketplace.

The dawn redwood can be grown in most parts of the US in Zones 5-9 and tolerates high moisture and somewhat dry conditions. Soil preferences are for neutral pH. All of these wonderful attributes seem to make the dawn redwood an ideal candidate as a replacement for any deciduous shade tree in a typical back yard.



This “topped” *Metasequoia* has assumed an unusual shape.

Three years ago, lightning struck our 75-year-old, 60-foot (18 m) tall Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) and the Japanese beetles devoured what was left of it; I think Mother Nature had overheard my disparaging words about this messy tree. We decided the time had come to let the elm ride the chipper truck. We planted a five-gallon *M. glyptostroboides* ‘Gold Rush’ purchased from Stanley and Sons Nursery in Boring, Oregon, and topped it the second year at 6 feet (1.8 m). We are looking forward to a sturdy and gloriously gold replacement for the damaged and messy Siberian elm, and we

intend to duplicate the pruning technique we admired at Holland, Michigan, on Windmill Island.

The only disadvantage of the dawn redwoods and the ‘Gold Rush’ cultivar we are growing is that Japanese beetles love them.

Overall, *Metasequoia* is an overlooked gem that could be a much better shade tree than some of the popular fast-growing deciduous trees. The shape can be left natural for a tall pyramidal tree or, if power lines are a concern, the low-topping pruning technique produces a very attractive round crown. ▲



A group of the dawn redwoods at Windmill Island resemble broadleaf shade trees from a distance.

About the author: Terri and Jay Park are hobbyist gardeners on four acres in the Indianapolis area. They joined the Conifer Society in 1997 and have been avidly collecting unusual conifers and other unusual plants for a decade. Regional meetings are a favorite part of this hobby because visiting other collector gardens always provides inspiration in plant material and design, and the members have become friends.

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National Meeting Focuses on Delaware Valley Horticultural Institutions

by Ridge Goodwin, meeting co-chair

Thursday, August 4th: Iseli Inspiration

The theme of this year's meeting will be "Conifer Cultivars in the Modern Landscape" with our selected speakers attempting to demonstrate how garden conifers, almost unknown to gardeners as little as twenty years ago, are now beginning to make inroads into the ever chang-

ing American landscape. **Jock Demme** from Iseli Nursery will kick things off Thursday evening following the Welcome Buffet Dinner with a slide presentation illustrating the many innovative landscape techniques featuring the use of conifers that are found surrounding the home office of this internationally acclaimed conifer nursery.

Friday, August 5th: Scott Arboretum and Chanticleer

We will proceed to Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, which is the home of one of the country's most prestigious universities and **The Scott Arboretum**. **Andrew Bunting**, the curator of collections, will give an address "Gardening with Conifers: The Artful Integration of Conifers in the Landscape," after which we will break into small groups for guided tours of this campus arboretum. There we will find a wonderful assortment of plants suitable for planting in the Delaware Valley that demonstrate the mission of the Arboretum. There are many magnificent specimens, some well over a century old. Following lunch at Swarthmore, we take off for **Chanticleer**, once a private garden of a wealthy industrialist, and now one of the jewels in the crown of first-rate horticultural institutions to be found in the greater Philadelphia area. Chanticleer describes itself as "a pleasure garden," and even football players have been known to be-

come enraptured by the beauty of this highly sophisticated and very well crafted garden! Back at the hotel later on in the afternoon, we'll get ready for our own form of contact sport, our famous rare plant auctions!

Saturday, August 6th: The Art of Display and Production

Following breakfast, architect **Brian Kelly** and **Douglas Kale** from Kale's Nursery will give us a preview of the **Grounds for Sculpture** in Trenton, New Jersey, that we will be visiting later in the morning. The site is a relatively new sculpture garden commissioned by Seward Johnson on the site of the old Trenton Fair Grounds. Brian and Doug will lead us through the design and installation phases of the sculpture and the many specimen conifers that are quite sculptural in their own right, or have been manipulated or used in combination to create startling sculptural effects. It is safe to say that here is a garden the likes of which you have never seen before, nor that you are likely to forget anytime soon! **David Daley** will then give us some international perspective on our topic with his talk "Landscaping with Conifers in Australia."

In the afternoon, we will motor down to South Jersey to **Blue Sterling Nursery** and the home of long time Society members **Jim and Barb Smith**. Here you will find extensive display gardens of the newest conifers in island beds surrounding the office complex as well as in the adjoining production facilities. Nearby, their home is a beautiful example of the theme of our meeting, landscaping with conifers, where mature plants interplay with

Extended Tour Explores the Hudson River Valley August 7-10, 2005

Here is a very brief overview of our itinerary. Please refer to conifersociety.org for additional details on these wonderful destinations!

On Sunday we depart for the **New York Botanical Garden** in Bronx, New York. There are three outstanding collections to see in this completely renovated arboretum and public park: the Ross Conifer Collection of species conifers, some over a century old; the rock garden, said to be one of the best in the country; and the newly renovated Benenson Conifer Collection, formerly the Robert H. Montgomery collection and home of the original R.H. Montgomery spruce! That evening we will be treated to a Hudson Valley wine reception at our host hotel in Mt. Kisco, New York, and given two tantalizing previews of our upcoming travels: **Martin Schmalenberg** on the pygmy pine forests and ice caves near Ellenville, New York, and **Jeff Lynch**, the person in charge of horticulture at the fabulous Ziff estate in Pawling, New York.

On Monday, we'll set out for a visit to the **Mohonk Mountain House** located in the Shawangunk mountains. Guided tours of the extensive gardens on the grounds of Mohonk will be followed by lunch in Mohonk's impressive dining



Anne Brennan

We guarantee that you'll want to come back to Chanticleer in Wayne, Pennsylvania, our Friday afternoon destination.

(continued from page 40)

newer varieties that you've probably not seen before, gleaned from their extensive world travels and wide ranging contacts here in the US. Along the way, you can brush up on your transplanting skills by attending a demonstration of proper digging, burlaping and roping techniques from masters of this ancient art, the celebrated local nurserymen **Fred and Cheryl Vieth, Marty Brooks** and

Ted Kiefer. Confused by how to drum lace a ball? Come and find out how the pros do it – we'll even show you a short-cut method! Having thus worked up an appetite, a pig roast and chicken barbecue will certainly take the edge off, along with Jersey fresh sweet white corn, and fresh picked tomatoes right out of the nearby fields! Some of you won't want to go home! ▲

(continued from page 40)

hall. From there, we will proceed to **Sam's Point**, for a guided tour of the pygmy pine forest and nearby ice caves with **Martin Schmalenberg**, the noted authority on the arts of Bonsai and Suiseki (rock appreciation) who has collected in these mountains for over twenty years.

Tuesday's adventures will begin with a visit to **The Cloisters** in Bronx, New York, which is a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art devoted to the art and architecture of medieval Europe. Next we'll visit **Wave Hill**, a former wealthy financier's estate overlooking the Hudson River and the New Jersey Palisades, where we'll have lunch on the veranda after enjoying the grounds. Next will be the *ne plus ultra* of the entire trip when we arrive at the **Ziff Estate** in Pawling, New York, which is a re-creation of an undisturbed Piedmont landscape from what we presume were a number of old dairy farms. Machinery has been developed on the estate to completely transform the topography and move huge boulders and

mature trees like so many pebbles and matchsticks! To end the day, we'll take a sunset cocktail/dinner cruise up the Hudson River.

Wednesday morning, we'll venture over to see **Marlowe Marcus**, a venerable Society member and the owner of a *Fagus* (beech) collection said to be the most complete in the United States, not to mention interesting Japanese maple and conifer collections. Then we'll visit his daughter's house just a few miles away, which Marlowe has landscaped with such care and devotion that some have referred to it as "Marlowe's Sistine Chapel"! Here you can get one last good look at an excellent example of the theme of our recently concluded meeting – "Conifer Cultivars in the Modern Landscape." These and other lessons learned during our adventure can then be mulled over with a glass of wine at the nearby Madeline's Petit Paris restaurant, where we will have a leisurely lunch before boarding the coach back to the Radisson Hotel in Moorestown, New Jersey, and the end of a wonderful journey. ▲

Society Name Issue Addressed at Winter 2005 Board Meeting

by Tom Cox, American Conifer Society national president

During the winter board meeting, the Board of Directors voted to change the name used for doing business from the Conifer Society to the American Conifer Society.

Background

When the board voted in 2002 to change the name to the Conifer Society, the decision was based on the perception that, as we looked to expand our international participation, removing the word "American" from the name would broaden our base.

Feedback

Since this occurred, we have heard from a number of you (both nationally and internationally), and the message is the same: We are an American-based organization with international members, and our organization should be named the

American Conifer Society.

Just as there is a British Conifer Society and a Dutch Conifer Society to which some of our members belong, we are an American organization as opposed to "the" Conifer Society which could be interpreted as the only society.

This name change to the American Conifer Society was not done to reflect any notion of national pride but rather to more accurately identify our organization. ▲



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New American Conifer Society Scholarship Announced

by Gerald Kral

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. **Directory Listing:** Either the Applicant or the agent sponsoring the Applicant must have a current membership in the American Conifer Society and be listed in the current Membership Directory. A Directory may be obtained from: *The Conifer Society National Office, PO Box 3422, Crofton, MD 21114-0422*. To obtain a Directory, you must be a member.
2. **Membership Type:** The American Conifer Society Scholarship is open to all membership categories listed in the Table of Contents of the Membership Directory **excluding** the Directorate, Regional office holders, and any paid staff or paid contractual agent.
3. **Application form:** To be eligible, an Application Form must be completed. Forms may be downloaded from the American Conifer Society website at www.conifersociety.org or you may request a form from: *The American Conifer Society Scholarship Committee, 900 Winton Rd. N., Rochester, NY 14609*. Forms are also available from the National Office. An Application Form is valid for one year. You may reapply in subsequent years by completing a new application each year.
4. **Sponsorship:** Only **one** Applicant per Directory Listing is allowed per

year. Dependents of members may apply using the member's Directory Listing. The sponsor member's signature is required. Corporate or Institutional members may sponsor one Applicant directly or an Applicant may use a Corporate or Institutional Directory Listing as their sponsor. A signature from the Corporate or Institutional Sponsor is required.

5. **Educational Purpose:** The Scholarship may be used for any educational purpose that helps fulfill the mission of the Society. In general this is the study, development, preservation, promotion and appreciation of conifers (including *Ginkgo*), with emphasis on the dwarf and unusual, in landscapes and gardens both public and private. Examples might be tuition, textbooks, reference books, CDs, DVDs, videotapes, and software. Workshops, work study programs or classes offered by legitimate organizations such as Cooperative Extensions, horticultural societies and symposia are examples of some other legitimate educational usages.
6. **Deadlines:** You must apply between May 1 and June 30, 2005. The actual monetary Award will be issued during July or August 2005.
7. **Publicity Releases:** Be aware that your name, short biography and educational purpose of the scholarship may appear in the *Conifer Quarterly*

and/or on our website as a scholarship announcement and may be used as publicity for future American Conifer Society Scholarships. Your address (regular and e-mail) and phone number will NOT be released.

8. **Selection:** Upon receipt of a properly completed application, you will be assigned a number. A postcard will be mailed indicating the acceptance of your application and the number you were assigned. A random drawing will be held and the winning number will be selected. You will be notified directly of your award. The winning number will be posted in the *Conifer Quarterly* and/or on our website along with your name, short bi-

ography and the purpose for which the Award will be used.

9. **Scholarship Amount:** The scholarship will be valued at \$500.00. The winning Applicant will be paid by check. Additional \$500.00 scholarships may become available. A separate drawing will be held for each additional scholarship. The winning numbers will not be recycled.

Return completed forms to:

American Conifer Society
Scholarship Committee
900 Winton Road, N.
Rochester, NY 14609

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The Conifer Society welcomes advertising from companies and individuals selling conifers, companion plants, gardening supplies and other plant-related products and services.

Southeastern Region to Meet in Roanoke this Fall

by Maud Henne, Southeastern Region president

This year's meeting of the Southeastern Region will take place in Roanoke, Virginia, Sept. 30 to Oct. 1, 2005. Our educational program will include visits to the arboreta of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg and the Western Virginia Community College in Roanoke,

as well as the private gardens of Dr. Alex Niemiera, curator of the arboretum in Blacksburg, and Gary Osborne near Roanoke. All four sites feature many types of conifers in a variety of settings.

Roanoke is easily reached by car via I-81 and has an airport as well. The countryside and vistas are spectacular due to the Blue Ridge Mountains that run parallel to I-81 and are easily accessible from Roanoke.

Roanoke itself offers many museums featuring the history of western Virginia. The Virginia Museum of Transportation boasts the largest collection of locomotives in the southeastern United States plus other railroad memorabilia. The Science Museum includes a Planetarium, the Rescue Museum offers a look into national emergency services, and the Explore Park is an 1100-acre living history park featuring a 1671 American Indian Village, 1740 frontier life and an 1859 farmstead. About an hour north of Roanoke, just 15 miles south of Lynchburg, is the Natural Bridge, a 200-foot high natural rock spanning a creek. This park features remnants of naturally occurring arborvitae, claimed to be 1600 years old, and living *Thuja* growing in the crevices of the rock walls.

We hope you will plan to come to our meeting and leave some time for vacationing! ▲

Conifer Society Slide Sets Available to Members for Local Presentations



Would you like to talk to your garden club or social organization about gardening with conifers?

Two slide sets featuring attractive plant combinations and design ideas are available to Conifer Society members. Many of the images come from the collection of Charlene Harris.

Contact coordinator Byron Richards at (828) 696-0801 to borrow the slides.

Western Region Hosts Show Booth, Plans Rendezvous

by Horst Jeddelloh, Western Region president

The American Conifer Society had a booth at the Yard, Garden and Patio Show held in Portland, Oregon, during February 18-20, 2005. Total show attendance for the weekend approached 30,000, and we saw lots of interest in conifers due to the plant material that we had on display. Iseli Nursery and Monrovia loaned us large plants and Jeddelloh Farms provided smaller examples.

The most popular plant was an *Abies nordmanniana* 'Golden Spreader,' borrowed from Iseli. Some new Monrovia plants loaned for the event included *Picea glauca* 'Haal' ('Alberta Blue') and

Picea glauca 'Blue Wonder.'

The booth was staffed by members Joe Harris, Brian Jacob, Horst Jeddelloh, Darrell Massung, Lenise Kilbourne, Kathleen Pottratz, Don Howse, and Pete Conrad.

The Western Region is planning a rendezvous in May at Pete Conrad's home in Battleground, Washington. We hope that our members who attend will bring with them prospective members and introduce them to conifers.

Don Howse plans to host a second rendezvous later in the year. ▲



Courtesy of Brian Jacob

Horst Jeddelloh (left) and Brian Jacob greeted visitors with smiles at the Yard, Garden and Patio Show in Portland this past February.

Central Region Will Gather in Minneapolis in June

by Gary Whittenbaugh, Central Region president

Meeting in Minnesota

First and foremost, I would like to invite everyone to the **Central Region meeting** in Minnesota from June 24-26, 2005. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, our anchor garden for this meeting, features more than 1,000 acres of unique public gardens. The arboretum's main objectives are to develop and evaluate plants and horticultural practices for cold climates, and to inspire and delight all visitors with quality plants in well-designed and maintained displays and collections including dwarf conifers, model landscapes and conservation areas. There will also be plenty of private gardens to visit.

As a bonus for those traveling long distances, we have planned **The Iowa Stopover** for Thursday, June 23, 2005. There will be a picnic at Franmara Garden (the Whittenbaugh garden) plus several open gardens in the Oelwein / Independence area to visit. The Stopover is only open to those attending the Central Region Meeting, but there is no additional cost. Once you register for the meeting, you will receive the Stopover information and a list of local motels to arrange on your own.

For those of you who have never been to Minnesota, I sug-

gest you plan some vacation time around this meeting. Minnesota is known as "The Land of 10,000 Lakes" and is a nature lover's paradise. Minneapolis, which means the "City of Lakes," has 950 lakes in the metro area plus 136,900 acres of parkland. Shoppers will enjoy the Mall of America, which is the largest shopping center in the United States and is located in Minneapolis. *I urge you to please get those meeting registrations returned and hotel reservations made early.*

CENTRAL REGION MEETING
June 24 - 26, 2005
Minneapolis, MN

Hotel: Minneapolis Marriot Southwest
5801 Opus Parkway
Reservations: 952/935-5500
Hotel Rate: \$81.00 single/dbl
The room rate will be honored until
the room block is filled.

●
THE IOWA STOPOVER
Thursday, June 23, 2005
Picnic and local open gardens
Information for the Stopover will be
mailed to all meeting registrants
Meeting Registrations will be mailed to
Central Region Members in April.
Others may request information from
Charlene Harris
734/433-9773 charris@provide.net

Regional Events

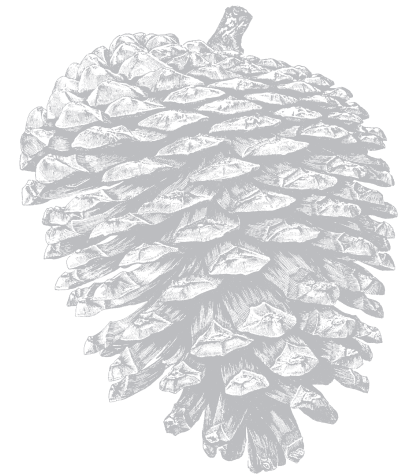
Local events in the Central Region got off to a great start in 2005 with a **Grafting Workshop** at Gee Farms on January 22nd. Despite blizzard conditions, the grafting class was well attended with participants from Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan. (*Editor's Note: The grafting workshop will be covered in more detail in a Summer 2005 Conifer Quarterly article.*)

The **2005 Iowa Garden Rendezvous** date is set for May 15. Iowa residents on the Rendezvous mailing list will receive registration forms in March. Others who would like to attend, please give me a call at (319) 283-3050 or e-mail franmara@trxinc.com and I will send you a registration packet. Check the Conifer Society website or watch for announcements in the *Conifer Quarterly* for other events throughout the year.

I wish to end my term as Central Region president by saying that it has been a fun-filled and exciting four years. Now we need others to step forward and run for office. If you or someone you know is willing to volunteer, please contact Charlene Harris, Gary Whittenbaugh or Bill Barger.

In closing I would like to thank everyone for their help during the past four years and particularly the following individuals:

Charlene Harris, secretary, who has helped me in more ways than anyone can imagine. She has always been there when I needed help. Charlene is ending her 15-year tenure with the Central Region in June. A new secretary is needed.



Ellen Kelley, treasurer, who is a great help in the region and who, with husband Jim, does a great job at the auctions. Ellen will be staying on as Central Region treasurer.

Bill Barger, vice president, who did yeoman work at the 2004 National in Ohio. Bill is a candidate for Central Region president; a new vice president needed. Please step forward.

Glenn Herold, past vice president and Editor of *Conifer Consortium*, the Central Region's newsletter. Glenn does a great job with this newsletter and has been instrumental in helping me recruit new members.

Terri Park, volunteer coordinator. This is a new position in the Central Region and Terri has just done a marvelous job at getting this started.

The **State Reps** who have always been willing to help when I was in their area.

Last but not least my brother **Tom** and my **Iowa Entourage** for all of their support and camaraderie. ▲

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Flo Chaffin



This *Pinus virginiana* 'Wates Golden' (left) was a highlight of the Porterhewse Collection, Flo Chaffin's first stop on her tour of Oregon nurseries. Later, she visited Iseli Nurseries (below) where she toured the vast container production areas.

Flo Chaffin



Maud Henne ran across these male inflorescences of *Pinus elliottii* during a walk through the Audubon Newhall Nature Preserve on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.



Maud Henne



Juniperus sillicicola (Southern red-cedar). Read about more of Maud Henne's discoveries during her recent trip through South Carolina and Florida beginning on page 10. Photo by Maude Henne.