

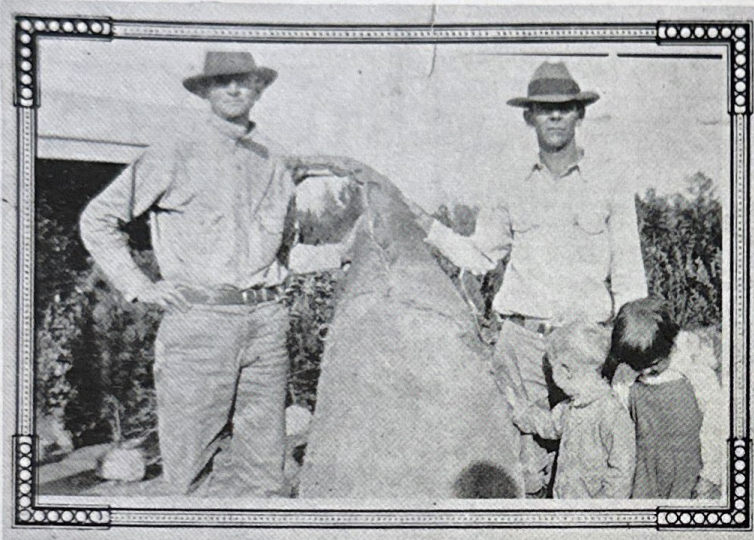
Louisiana's **NURSERYMEN**

The official publication of the Louisiana Association of Nurserymen, Inc.

Volume 4

Number 3

September 1981



The early days of Forest Hill

Before the advent of container growing, nursery stock was grown in the well-hoed ground and shipped by rail in big burlap parcels (held by the Poole Brothers H.J. and Murphy). Worker at right stands behind azaleas on the site of what is now George Johnson's Nursery. See article on page 8.

Application for L.A.N. Certified Nurseryman's Examination *

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Nursery Affiliation Owner _____ Employee _____

*This application must be accompanied by a \$25.00 check or money order made payable to L.A.N. An additional charge of \$10.00 will be made for re-examination of those sections failed.

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Louisiana Association of Nurserymen, Inc.

Gentlemen:

I hereby make application for membership in your association, subject to the approval of my application by your Membership Committee. I also agree that the decision of the Membership Committee shall be considered final by myself without any appeal.

Enclosed herewith is the sum of \$____ covering my membership for the year ending January 1, 19____

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Mail application blank and check to:

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Foret's Forays

Our annual TAN-MISLARK Trade Show in Dallas was probably our best yet. There were about 1,029 exhibit spaces and attendance was over 6,000. Buying activity was excellent Sunday and Monday, but fell off sharply Tuesday.

The majority of our growers reported good activity, but a good number felt

that the surplus of one-gallon material from California has reduced demand considerably. I discussed the poor market conditions with several old timers and they feel that good conditions will return by Spring '82 provided construction picks up to absorb this oversupply of plant materials.

During our general membership meeting, Frank Akin discussed our LAN 1982 Convention and Short Course. Following results of a survey conducted last year in New Orleans, Frank has scheduled events to start Friday, January 8, and close Sunday noon.

More information will be mailed to you shortly.

President Walter Imahara reviewed forthcoming changes in the Horticulture Law. New regulations will also be drafted affecting all licensed Horticulturists and Landscape Contractors.

Walter also announced that he and Frank Akin are negotiating with Mississippi to hold a joint Short Course and Convention in January, 1984.

Dr. J. A Foret

Nursery Field Day

The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service will hold its annual Field Day Thursday, October, 15, at the Burdin Research Plantation in Baton Rouge:

Following registration at 1:30 p.m., Extension horticulturists will lead tours of the research plots and facilities. The Burdin center is in its second year of research, and concentrates on container plant fertility and herbicide studies.

Dr. Warren Meadows encourages all nurserymen to bring their spouses; a tour of the Rural Life Museum and a social hour will follow the research tour.

The Burdin Plantation is at 4560 Essen Lane. The Essen Lane exit off of Interstate 10 is about a mile east of the Interstate 12 exit. There is no registration fee.

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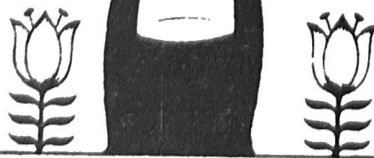
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The Horticultural Research Institute has recently released a booklet titled *New Horizons—1980*. In it are articles on Building a Better Tree, Operating for Profit—Magic Numbers that Count, Use of Microculture in the Production and Improvement of Nursery Crops, Research on Root Regeneration, Control and Prevention of Iron Chlorosis of Landscape Plants, and many other research results.

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Shipping costs have forced several large nurseries from California to Oklahoma to located huge new container plant nurseries in the Houston-San Antonio area. The result is a much more highly competitive market, particularly in Texas.

The new installations include a Hines branch near Houston encompassing over 200 acres; a Bordier's Nursery branch of similar size near San Antonio, and a Greenleaf Nursery of 150 acres.

With that many new acres in production, the Houston and Dallas markets that many LAN members ship to is now a buyers' market, and it will be for some time.

One LAN member said 60 percent of his stock formerly went to Texas, 40 percent to Louisiana. Those numbers are now 40/60.

The market is now so tight that Orange County Nursery from Florida which had purchased 400 acres in south central Texas, is rumored to have tabled plans to develop a nursery there.

Most feel that the upshot is that LAN members will have to improve the quality of their plants in order to compete, since buyers can now be more selective.

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New rooting technique

Severn Doughty's Cooperative Extension newsletter quotes a remarkable new rooting formula that's as cheap and accessible as the nearest willow tree. Originally reported in the Memphis Botanic Garden newsletter, it's worth passing on:

Several years ago a remarkably potent root-promoting compound was discovered in willow extract by Prof. Makota Kawase of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (Wooster, OH 44691).

Subsequent work by Prof. Kawase shows that this substance is not a plant hormone, and that "alone, it seems to have the ability to stimulate rooting unmatched by any previously known rooting substance, including the plant hormones...Its root-promoting effect increases sharply when it is applied to cuttings with plant hormones." Prof. Kawase theorizes that the substance may be the elusive hypothetical rhizocaline, a compound which is believed to translocate along with the hormone indoleacetic acid (IBA) to the base of cuttings to work with the hor-

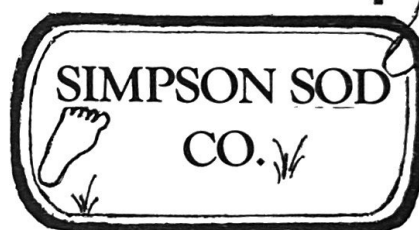
none to stimulate the formation of roots. He reports that yellow birch cuttings — which are almost impossible to root — produce no roots when treated with Hormodine #2 (.3% IBA), but the willow extract plus Hormodine #2 resulted in 100% rooting.

The OARDC is now working with the Chemistry department of The College of Wooster to purify and synthesize the substance. Gardeners who would like to experiment can steep willow cuttings in

water for 48 hours, then place cuttings of any woody species in the same water for 24 to 48 hours. Then immediately treat them with Hormodine #2 and stick them in the cutting bed. It might also be worthwhile to try soaking seeds of woody plants in willow water, and watering transplants stimulate germination and root development. Prof. Kawase's "dream chemical", incidentally, was found in varying amounts in every woody species he tested.

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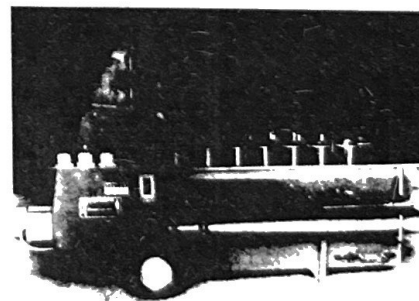
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Replacement cost of this equipment is over \$15,000.00. We are offering it for \$10,750.00. Anyone interested may contact Michael Richard at Live Oak Gardens, Ltd. at Jefferson Island, Louisiana. The phone number is (318) 367-3485.

Tax breaks for greenhouse purchase

That new greenhouse you've been wanting—how much is it really going to cost? If you play your cards right with IRS, Uncle Sam will give you a sizeable discount in the form of tax relief.

Dr. Joe Pena, economist for the Texas A&M Extension Service, has documented how a family operation could save \$3,595 in taxes by purchasing a 30 by 96 foot greenhouse.

"Changes in the interpretation of tax laws now allow greenhouses to qualify for investment credit," Pena explains. By using a whole floor sand bed and a \$2,000 solar collector, purchasers of the greenhouse qualify for an additional business energy credit. Other breaks come in depreciating the cost of the structure and in deducting interest expenses from taxable income.

Actual savings will vary with your income tax bracket and other taxables. Pena postulates in his example a husband-wife ownership of the greenhouse; their taxable income of \$24,600 entails a tax liability of \$4,505.

Those permanent parts of the greenhouse which Pena says qualify for investment credit, and his cost figures, are as follows: structure (\$6,000), heating/cooling equipment (\$2,500), irrigation system (\$960), growing system (\$610), whole floor of sand (\$1,250), other equipment (\$960) and a solar collector/heat exchanger (\$2,000). From this total price a 10 percent investment credit of \$1,428 can be subtracted from taxes.

The solar collector and the sand floor (which serves both as a floor and as a



Dr. Joe Pena examines greenhouse tomatoes

"thermal flywheel" to store heat) qualify for an additional 15 percent business energy credit, Pena explains. Subtract \$487 from taxes.

In figuring deductible expenses, Pena adds depreciation on the structure and equipment, and an interest expense of \$2,268, to arrive at total deductions of \$6,480. At 26 percent taxpayer's marginal rate, this is a tax savings of \$1,684.

Added together, the \$3,595 constitute more than a 20 percent government "subsidy" for investing in a greenhouse.

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Kent Langlinais, Owner and Manager of Kent's Nursery, Youngsville, was elected Vice President of the American Association of Nurserymen during its 106th Convention and Trade Show in Cincinnati. Langlinais will continue to serve as Director of Region V, representing members in Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Upon graduation from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Langlinais established Kent's Nursery, and has been operating the wholesale nursery for the past 20 years. Kent's Nursery became a member of the AAN in 1971. It also holds membership in the Louisiana Association of Nurserymen and Wholesale Nursery Growers of America.

Before being elected to the AAN Board, Langlinais served the Association as Governor on its Board of Directors from 1972 until 1976. In 1974 he was the Agriculture Commissioner of Louisiana, representing the wholesale nursery industry in that state. He also



served as president of the Southwestern Louisiana Association of Nurserymen for 12 years. Langlinais has served as

board member, second vice president, first vice president, and president of the Louisiana Association of Nurserymen.

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Harvey Taylor, son of the second nurseryman to set up shop in Forest Hill, maintains a flawless collection of hundreds of varieties of camellia and azalea, as well as general nursery stock.

Forest Hill: The formative nurseries

Eighteen miles south of Alexandria, on the southern fringe of the Piney Woods, is the largest concentration of nurseries in Louisiana. Between Forest Hill and Lecompte, along highway 112, are close to 100 nurseries, and almost that number line the highways in other directions from Forest Hill.

It's a peaceful place of pickup trucks, friendly people, bass boats, small tractors, greenhouses, and well-tended

landscapes.

Although many new nurseries have come to Forest Hill from out-of-state in the past several years, there are many second- and third-generation growers. Three early nurseries were the rootstock from which these local scions grew: Sam Stokes and Son, Taylor's Nursery, and Poole Brothers.

Sam Stokes was the first Forest Hill nurseryman, and one of the first

Louisiana nurserymen. He came to Forest Hill in 1896, according to his grandson, nurseryman Rodney Stokes.

"He bought land for \$1 an acre. He didn't buy much—it was too high at that price, he said. He began growing fruit trees for his own use, and neighbors encouraged him to grow some for them, too. By 1900, he had a well-established nursery. He branched out into growing nearly everything."

In the early days, all stock was field-grown. Marketing was done by catalog, and most sales were to individuals. On receiving an order, Stokes would dig the stock bare root, dip it in a special mud mixture, wrap the roots with moss, and ship via rail.

Stokes passed on the nursery to his son, Samuel N., who passed it on to Rodney. During the years the Stokes holdings grew to over 150 acres.

When container culture began replacing field growing about 15 years ago, Rodney opted out of growing woody plants, and began producing bedding plants, hanging baskets and vegetable plants.

He's done well at it. "It seems like the tighter the economy gets, the more my business increases—people put in gardens, and need vegetable plants." Getting out of container growing also alleviated for Stokes what is a constant problem for nurserymen—finding labor.

Taylor

Taylor's nursery opened in 1920. Harvey Taylor, whose father began the business, has worked full-time at the nursery since the 1930s. His father and Sam Stokes were good friends; their nurseries a stone's throw apart.

The early Taylor stock included field-grown sweet olive, gardenia, arbor vitae, easter lilies, cherry laurel, and magnolia grandiflora. Taylor made the transition to container growing in the early '60s, and today grows a tremendous variety of specimen plants, including over 200 varieties of camellia and a wide range of azaleas. He also has other common nursery stock, all grown in two- and three-gallon containers.

Poole Brothers

M.A. Poole and H.J. Poole, Sr., began Poole Brothers Nursery shortly after Taylor got started in the early '20s. Business was slow in the early days.

"Dad would go to work in the rice fields at \$1.50 a day to bring in some cash," remembers H.J. Poole, Jr., who now owns the original nursery site. "He'd give my uncle 75 cents for staying at the nursery."

They began with a couple of rows of rooted roses, and strawberry plants. They expanded in similar fashion to their neighbor nurserymen, printing a catalog and shipping plants by rail.

The Pooles also developed a good trade with Morgan and Lindsay stores during the Depression. "We delivered plants to stores in Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles and Alexandria. They'd take 'em on consignment and



Mrs. Bessie Chamberlain Poole married H.J. Poole, Sr., one of the original Poole Brothers. Now 77 years old, she still enjoys nursery work and helps manage Midway Nursery with her son Larry. Shown at right, Bessie's sister Dessa married H.J.'s brother Murphy.





H.J. Poole, Jr., remembers the days when he helped root cuttings in a clay bed beneath this cypress tree. His nursery is in the background.

the managers would see the plants were watered. You can't do that now," Poole says.

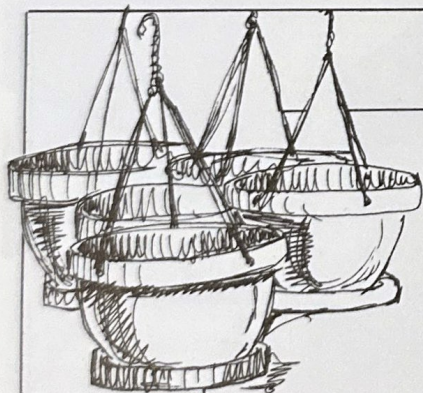
The original Poole Brothers married Chamberlain sisters. "My sister Dessa and I would take turns cooking and watching the children, while the other waited on customers or worked in the nursery," remembers Bessie Poole, who married H.J. Poole, Sr.

"We stayed open on Sunday, and people would come out from Alexandria, and we'd ball and burlap plants they'd pick out in the field.

"Dessa and I would cook for the men and serve coffee every day at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m." Mrs. Poole remembers.

For many years the Pooles, Stokes and Taylors were the only nurseries. In the period after World War II, a new generation of nurserymen began the first big expansion of the Forest Hill nursery industry.

Several men who had worked for Poole Brothers Nursery began their own operations; among them were Robert Young (of the nursery by the same name), Richard Polacovich (of Rich-



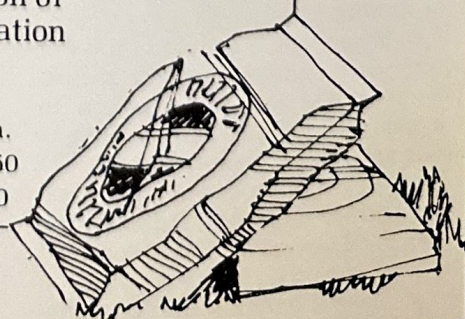
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ard's Nursery), and the late O.D. Chamberlain.

Two second generation Pooles, Sam and H.J., Jr., joined George Johnson in buying out the original Poole Brothers, in 1955. Bessie and H.J. Poole, Sr., moved toward Forest Hill about 100 yards and began Midway Nursery. He died five years later and she now manages Midway with her son, Larry.

Johnson and the two second-generation Pooles remained partners until 1970, when they divided the mutually held parcels of land. "We parted on good terms," Johnson says, "we simply reached the point where we were getting older, and our children were getting older, and if one of us had died it would have been a problem to pass anything on to the children. We still help each other quite a bit."

In dividing the Poole Brothers' land, H.J. Poole, Jr., remained on the original site; Johnson received a tract half a mile toward Forest Hill, and Sam Poole got the land nearest Forest Hill. All are successful nurserymen now, and are joined by new generations of sons, daughters and inlaws.



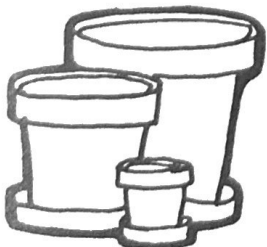
George Johnson and Sam Poole, two of the post-World-War II nurserymen who bought out the Poole brothers, got their early nursery experience through a government on-the-job training program, 1945-47. At right, H.J. Poole, Sr., holds a terrier in front of a wisteria bush.



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Foret receives ARP award



The Texas Association of Nurserymen has given its highest honor to Dr. J.A. Foret, dean of the USL College of Agriculture.

At the annual TAN-MISSLARK nursery show held recently in Dallas, the Texas group presented Foret with the Arp Award. Initiated by the Arp family of Tyler, the award recognizes the individual who, in the opinion of a panel of Texas nurserymen, has made the greatest contribution to the Texas nursery industry.

The Arp award has gone to only four non-Texans since it was initially awarded in 1942. Three of those men are USL alumni: in addition to Foret, Earl Vallot, owner of Grandview Nursery, Youngsville; and Sidney Meadows, general manager of Flowerwood Nursery, Mobile, Alabama.

"I don't think a more deserving person ever received the award," said Bill Fullingim, executive vice president of the Texas Association of Nurserymen. "Dr. Foret has served on the TAN-MISSLARK trade show policy committee, and is now an assistant to the show manager. He has been dependable and thorough in his service to the trade show, and he has spoken to numerous seminars and short courses here in Texas."

The Arp award is a silver bowl that,

by tradition, is filled with champagne as it is presented to the honoree. Although the award passes from winner to winner, each recipient receives a replica of the bowl as a memento of the award.

Cont. on Page 14

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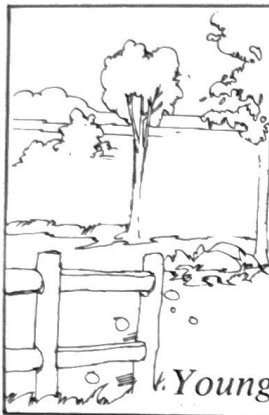
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Cont. from Page 13

The TAN-MISSLARK show is the major annual meeting of nurserymen from Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas. Held this August in Dallas, it attracted over 6,000 participants.

A native of Lutcher, Louisiana, Dr. Foret has contributed many years of service to horticultural research and to the nursery industry.

He has been secretary to the Louisiana Association of Nurserymen since the group was first formed in 1954. He is an honorary LAN life member, and has been active in promoting professionalism among state nurserymen through a certification program and short courses.

Foret has represented the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research on plant collecting trips in the southern U.S. and on a three-week tour of New Zealand.

His research interests include aquatic weed control, fertilizing and potting media for nursery stock, and testing new plant varieties.

He has been a judge in the All-American Rose trials, and was general chairman for the South Louisiana Camellia Society show for several years.

Foret became the dean of the USL College of Agriculture in 1974. Under his administration the college acquired a new 600-acre farm laboratory near Cade, and is now in the process of developing it as a teaching and research facility.

He joined the USL faculty in 1950, after earning his Ph.D. at Iowa State University. He graduated from USL in 1943, and served in Europe during World War II.

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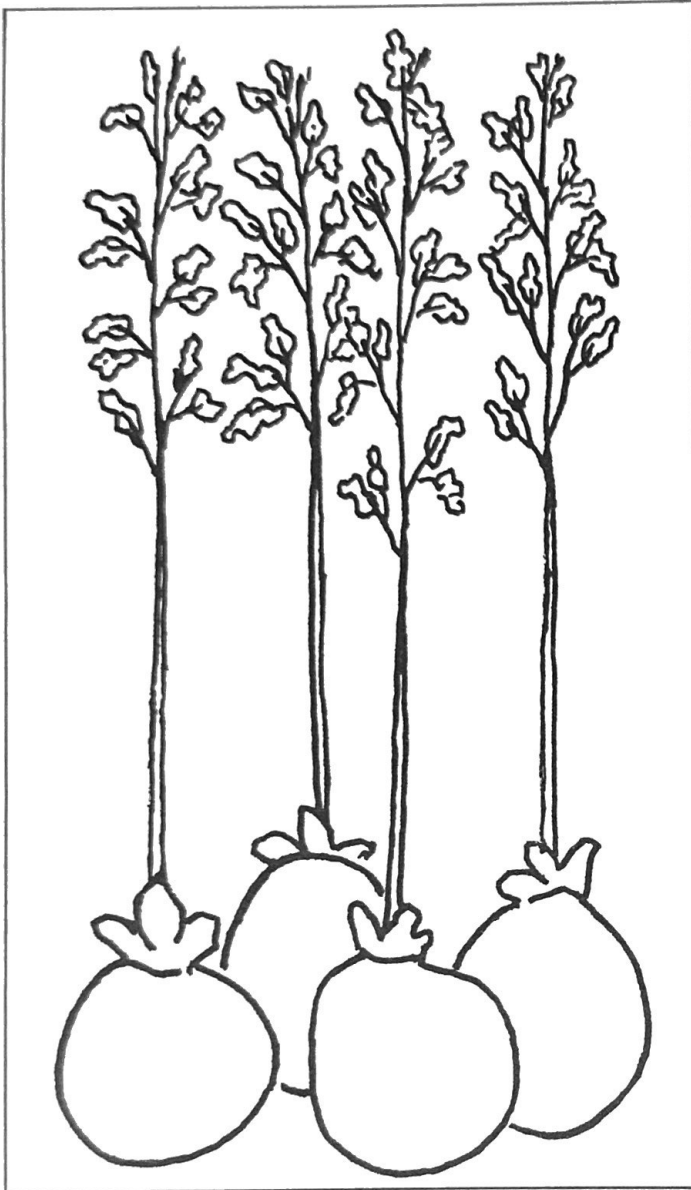
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