

**Houston Hemerocallis Society
(Since 1953)**

**Part II Highlights
“In the Beginning”**

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October 27, 2011**

Around 1951, when Jack Carpenter was 13 years old, he was taken to the Russell Daylily Farm in Spring, Texas. Mr. Hugh Russell toured Jack, his Uncle Vernon, and Aunt Adelia Carpenter along the rows of daylilies. It was here that Jack's interest grew. Two years later Jack had his own hybridized seedlings blooming.

After graduating from college he taught one year on Long Island, New York. He then moved onto Strack Road where he continued to teach both at Trinity Lutheran Church School and in the Klein Independent School District. When he moved on Strack Road his Aunt Adelia gave him 1.5 acres where he began getting daylilies from the Hugh Russell stock, located on the land of Henry and Ola Theiss. Henry Theiss had some of Russell's best daylilies and they gave Jack some of them.

Ola Theiss, told me in an interview that she went to AHS National Conventions with Jenny (Russell) Kleb and that at one of the Conventions she had her first ever stuffed baked potato. Henry Theiss explained to me how he had shown Hugh Russell the way to farm the land in the Klein area, as it was low land. Mr. Theiss said, “If you put your daylilies in raised rows they will do better.” Mr. Russell had moved from the hill country that drained well and was farming with that method. After following Mr. Theiss' advice the daylilies took off. Mr. and Mrs. Theiss were friends with the Russells. Daylilies were raised on the Theiss farm land, also.

Mr. Theiss and many others from Trinity Lutheran worked for Mr. Russell on the daylily farm. Thus, I bought the daylily book remembering the first 50 years of AHS and placed it in the school library at Trinity.

When Jack Carpenter began getting the Russell stock from the Theiss farm, he began an expanded adventure in hybridizing. Russell stock also came from, “Triangle T Daylily Farm” on Stuebner-Airline, Spring, Texas, that was owned by the Thornwell Kleb's.

Jack Carpenter began attending Houston Hemerocallis Society (HHS) around 1967. There he met Bertha Cone and others. Bertha Cone and Helen Spiller asked him to drive them to the Spalding and MacMillan gardens in Louisiana. They always took Helen's car. When Jack saw the daylilies in those gardens he began purchasing some. Bertha Cone, a member of HHS, gave Jack many potted daylily seedlings that she had crossed from Spalding and MacMillan stock. Jack brought them into bloom and hybridized with the pollen.

Bertha registered some of her daylilies from the Strack Road location. One registered daylily was *Hemerocallis* ‘**Texas Cardinal**’. Among Jack's first registered daylilies were; *H.* ‘**Symmetrical Beauty**’ and ‘**Pink Pasha**’.

Jack remembers conducting meetings at HHS but doesn't know what year it was. The time period would be around 1967-1971. He remembers entering one of the shows, but after entering he left to tend to customers at his daylily garden named “Pampas Garden” on Strack Road. Later that evening Margaret Standard (Senior and Jr.) rolled into his driveway, laughing and handing him a basket full of ribbons, rosettes, and awards that he had won. He said in September

2011, that he still had those ribbons, rosettes, and awards.

Jack remembers Ken and Jean Wheeler, the Standards, Mary and Eddie Gage, Bertha and others that were members of HHS at that time.

We are currently trying to find the years between 1967 and 1974 when Jack was HHS President or was conducting the meetings in the absence of the officer. Any help along these lines would be appreciated. If you have HHS Yearbooks from this period we would like to read them.

In August 1974, Jack moved from Strack Road to Center, Texas. His daylily farm in Center was named “Rainbow Hill Daylily Nursery.”

In 1981, Jack sold most of his stock to Homer and Anna Rosa Glidden and kept 28 of his best daylilies which he hybridized making many seeds. He then bought a 20 acre farm from Josie Bomar and that became the home of “The Lily Farm.” He farmed about four acres of it. It is there that his daylilies produced outstanding color, substance, and growth.

On April 1, 2010, Jack sold “The Lily Farm” to his nephew, Mark Carpenter. He kept some of his selected daylilies to work with. He retained the right to hybridize, register, sell, and work with daylilies in any way he wishes, wherever he wants. Jack like many of us is now in his golden years and the body forces us to slow down.

Jack Carpenter, the man that started with HHS, has now moved on to win the Stout Gold Medal Award for *H.* ‘**Lavender Blue Baby**’ in 2008, at the AHS National Convention, in Houston, Texas.

Jack, your friends at HHS wish you well with years of future discoveries with your hybridization program. Happy Birthday October 2011.