

Nerium News

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL OLEANDER SOCIETY



May 2023 Newsletter

INTERNATIONAL OLEANDER SOCIETY

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Dear Members,

A busy month for us! First, the Aggies came to the garden for the Big Event and helped plant another two pallets of sod to replace the high maintenance mulch. We have another service event in August for further work. We were privileged to have Colonel Fossum, former astronaut and current Vice President of Texas A&M join his students in the Park. He explained the history and importance of the Big Event, which began in 1982 when six Aggies volunteered to clean up a local cemetery. Since that time, Aggie students show their appreciation to the surrounding community by completing service projects such as yard work, painting, and more.

We reintroduced our Oleander Festival Luncheon this year. The luncheon was held in the Viewfinders Terrace at Moody Gardens. Galveston City Manager, Brian Maxwell, presented the "April is Oleander Month in Galveston" Proclamation. Kimberly Gaido said a few words about her grandmother Kewpie Gaido and Robert Head attended on behalf of his mother Betty Head. We graciously thank our Chairperson Mary Lou Kelso, Moody Gardens for the beautiful venue and delicious Mexican Buffet, Brett Weaver for the AV equipment, Donita Brannon and Nick for the wonderful oleander centerpieces and door prizes, Martie Terry for the unique one of a kind Astros jewelry, Carla & Robert Peoples (photography) and our sponsors Heidi Coggeshall, Mary Cooper, Kimberly Gaido and Amber Jenkins.

Our guest speaker was Dr. Don Wilkerson, Professor Emeritus, Department of Horticultural Sciences at Texas A&M. A wonderful speech on oleanders, risks to the plants including climate change, and some thoughts for the future (more on the speech/ Festival in the next Newsletter).

Although the weather was not great for the Festival, we did have visitors after the sun peeked out from the clouds that morning. We were very fortunate that the Galveston Ukulele Society (GUS) was able to still entertain us. We are blessed to have a good relationship with GUS as there is nothing better than walking through the garden park listening them sing and play. We sold our propagated oleanders and homemade sachets, which were a big hit. The stepping stones from our vendor Alice's Garden Pavers and the oleander pottery dishes hand-made by Ginger Jones with GCC were also very popular. We would like to thank everyone who donated items for our raffle prizes as well as those who purchased tickets for the raffle. All of the proceeds from the raffle will be used for maintenance costs in the Betty Head Oleander Garden Park.

Yoga in the Park is becoming popular! We had another great Yoga on a Saturday in early April with Kris Daza-Taylor! Thank you Van Phipps and Sara Hawkes for organizing!

I would like to thank my fellow IOS Board members for all of their hard work and dedication to our mission and to the Betty Head Garden Park. I enjoy working with each and every one of you and I am proud to be a member of this group.

We are always looking for new volunteers and Board members to help us so please let us know if you are interested. We are open to new ideas so let us know if you have an interest or skill that would benefit IOS! Preserving Oleanders and keeping Galveston on the map as "The Oleander City" is very important and rewarding.

Peace, Love and Oleanders

Amber Jenkins

Everybody loves Mrs. Roeding – by James Nicholas

Everybody loves 'Mrs. Roeding' - a very widely-distributed oleander in the USA as well as in Europe, Australia, and Japan. '**Mrs. F. Roeding**' (also known as 'Mrs. Frederick Roeding', and incorrectly as 'Mrs. G. Roeding' and 'Mrs. George Roeding') is a medium-sized shrub with a somewhat horizontally spreading and weeping growth habit. The fragrant, fully double flowers exhibit a unique blend of "sunset" colors: salmon, yellow, orange, and pink. Prior to the major outbreak of leaf scorch disease in California, which was first reported in the late 1980s and killed essentially all the oleanders in the southern part of the state, 'Mrs. Roeding' lined hundreds of miles of California's freeways. It was introduced as early as 1897, possibly earlier, by Fancher Creek Nurseries of Fresno, California, and reportedly raised from seed imported from Japan.



*Oleander 'Mrs. F. Roeding', photo by
Wilhelm Hufnagl*

But who was this Mrs. Roeding?

Fancher Creek Nurseries was founded in 1884 by a German immigrant, Frederick Roeding, presumably born Friedrich Röding (1825 or 1822 -1910). He married Marianne Lazarus (1836-1937). Marianne was born in 1836 in Lüchow, Germany. She emigrated to America, arriving in San Francisco in 1866, and married Frederick in 1867. She was the Mrs. Roeding for whom the oleander was named. Thus, 'Mrs F. Roeding' (not 'Mrs. G. Roeding', or 'Mrs. George Roeding', as it sometimes appears) is the correct name.

Ms. Janet Barton, garden historian and volunteer worker at the California Nursery Historical Park, has discovered a Fancher Creek catalog dated 1897 which already lists 'Mrs. F. Roeding' with a full description (see illustration below)

“ **Mrs. F. Roeding (New)**—This magnificent Oleander, originated by us, is a chance seedling out of several thousand, raised from the imported varieties. If properly pruned to one stem, the branches form a fine compact, dense head, covered in summer with trusses of beautiful double pink flowers (the color of the La France rose) delightfully fragrant, and with fringed petals, which completely envelope the plant. The plant is perfectly hardy, more so than any other variety and it is in every respect a very superior Oleander, worthy of a place in every garden.

The page shown on the next page from Fancher Creek's 1912 catalog lists 'Mrs. F. Roeding' with an abbreviated description. Significantly, it also lists several cultivars ('Album plenum', 'Atropurpureum', 'Claude Blanc', 'Madame Planchon', 'Nankin' and 'Sister Agnes' or 'Soeur Agnès') introduced in the later 19th century by the Sahut nursery of Montpellier, France, which have since disappeared from commerce, with the exception of 'Soeur Agnès' or 'Sister Agnes', which was first listed by Sahut in 1873. George Roeding must have had contact with Sahut's nursery well prior to that year. Ms. Barton mentions that the Roeding family took a trip to Europe in 1912, during which a photograph was taken of an oleander growing on a street in Germany.

Fancher Creek's 1912 Catalog:



FANCHER CREEK NURSERIES - FRESNO, CAL.

hues, which appear all summer render them our most attractive and effective ornamental plants.

Boxes,	5 to 6 ft.	\$2.00 each
Boxes,	4 to 5 ft.	1.50 each
Potted,	3 to 4 ft.	1.25 each
Potted,	2 to 3 ft.	1.00 each
Potted,	1½ to 2 ft.	.75 each
Potted,	1 to 2 ft.	.60 each

Album Maximum. A robust grower with good foliage; single white flowers.

Album Plenum. The most perfect white variety; flowers very double in large trusses. Very free flowering.

Atropurpureum Duplex. One of the best doubles; deep carmine, streaked white.

Claude Blanc. Scarlet.

Lillian Henderson. Double white; heliotrope-scented.

Madam Sarah Bernhardt. Immense truss; single, delicate white streaked pink.

Mme. Planchon. Semi-double; rosy lilac.

Mrs. F. Roeding. Originated by us; strong fringed, color of La France rose.

Nankin. Single; salmon yellow; of dwarfish habit; best yellow.

Nankin Variegated. Leaves beautifully variegated; flowers double; light pink.

Purpureum. Single; deep carmine-crimson, shaded maroon.

Sister Agnes. Very large truss; single; pearly white; very free blooming.

Splendens Giganteum. Double rose; very fragrant; largest of all Oleanders; blooms all summer.

PITTOSPORUM. Very bright foliaged plants either growing compact with spreading branches or with an erect upright habit. They are all very ornamental and their attractive colors combined with the fact that some of them are very free flowering, causes them to be in demand for grouping, hedges and for lawn ornamentation.

Balled,	3 to 4 ft.	\$2.00 each
Balled,	2 to 3 ft.	1.50 each
Potted,	3 to 4 ft.	1.50 each
Potted,	2 to 3 ft.	1.25 each
Potted,	1½ to 2 ft.	1.00 each

Phillyraeoides. Australia. 30 feet. Slender, graceful habit like weeping willow; flowers yellow.

Rhombifolium (Queensland Pittosporum.) 20 feet. An ornamental tree suited for avenue planting. Flowers white and fragrant followed by yellow berries persisting all winter.

Undulatum (Wavy Leaved Pittosporum) Australia, 10 feet. Deep green, glossy leaves; flowers intensely fragrant at night.

Tobira (Japanese Pittosporum.) 10 feet. Low growing shrub, dark green leaves; fragrant flowers; pure white.

Tobira Variegatum (Variegated Japanese Pittosporum.) 4 feet. Same habit as the preceding; foliage margined white.

Balled,	2 to 3 ft.	\$1.75 each
Balled,	1 to 2 ft.	1.25 each

PLUM NATAL (Carrisa Grandiflora.) S. Africa. 20 feet. A striking flowering shrub.

Flowers have a strong Jasmine odor, succeeded by scarlet edible fruits; foliage glossy green.

Potted, 1½ to 2 ft. \$.75 each

POLYGALA DALMAISIANA. S. Africa. 4 feet. A very free blooming plant with rosy pea-shaped flowers completely enveloping it during the entire summer. The odd color and shape of the flowers and its free blooming make it very attractive. It will stand considerable frost.

Potted, 1½ to 2 ft. \$1.00 each



OLEANDER

PRIVET EVERGREEN (Ligustrum.) Ornamental shrubs or small trees, with shining green leaves and small, whitish flowers, followed by black round berries. Fine for tall hedges.

Boxed,	4 to 5 ft.	\$2.50 each
Boxed,	3 to 4 ft.	2.00 each
Boxed,	2 to 3 ft.	1.50 each
Boxed,	1½ to 2 ft.	1.00 each
Balled,	2 to 3 ft.	1.00 each

Japonicum (Japan Privet.) Japan. 15 feet. Glossy, dark, leathery leaves. White flowers in clusters; purplish berries.

Nepalense. Himalaya. 10 feet. An exceedingly strong, upright grower; light green leaves. Well adapted for hedges.

Reevesi (Reeves' Privet.) Small shrub, very small light green leaves; flowers white in sprays. Excellent for either hedge or specimen plant.

Robusta Variegatum. Rapid growth; rich green leaves beautifully variegated with yellow.

Sinense (Chinese Privet.) 10 feet. Slender spreading leaves shining dark above, light beneath; bluish black berries covered with bloom.

Pages from the 1906 catalogs:

The front cover of the 1906 catalog illustrates the "Wonderful" pomegranate; the back cover of the 1906 catalog bears a painting of the 'Mrs. F. Roeding' and 'Sarah Bernhardt' oleanders. They are posted by the Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection. <https://archive.org/details/catalogue1906fanc/page/n1/mode/2up>.



George C. Roeding was the son of Frederick Roeding. In 1917, George, who by then owned Fancher Creek, bought the California Nursery Company and added it to his nursery holdings. At some point in the 1930s the Fancher Creek name was dropped and everything was then called the California Nursery Company. The California Nursery Company went out of business in 1970 and the last 20 acres became a park. The archives of both of these companies, managed by Dr. Joyce Blueford, are located within this, the California Nursery Historical Park; Ms. Janet Barton kindly provided us with these catalog illustrations as well as the family photos seen below, plus a wealth of historical information. We are greatly indebted to her for her perseverant research and her willingness to share this information!

Bruce Roeding (born 1928) and Sandy (George III) Roeding (born 1930) are the great-grandsons of Frederick and Marianne. They remember their great-grandmother Marianne as always having cookies/biscuits in a tin for them. Marianne Lazarus Roeding lived to be 101 years old. She died when Bruce was 9 years old; Sandy would have been 7.



Left: Oleander 'Mrs. F. Roeding', photo by Wilhelm Hufnagl

Right: oleander from the California Nursery Historical Park – (color is more salmon than pink)



The photos below of the Roeding family were kindly provided by Janet Barton from the California Nursery Company – Roeding Archives, at the California Nursery Historical Park in Fremont, CA.



Frederick and Marianne (date unknown; possibly at the time of their wedding in 1867):



Frederick, Marianne, and family (1879)



Figure 1: Frederick and Marianne Roeding in a Fresno peach field, 1905.

Roeding Collection/Math Science Nucleus

Frederick and Marianne Roeding in a field of young peach trees in Fresno, California, 1905



MRS. FREDERICK CHRISTIAN ROEDING
1836—19—

And the kindly face of Mrs. F. (Marianne) Roeding at age 94 (1930):



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And follow us on Facebook: International
Oleander Society



Any questions: international.oleander@yahoo.com

To Join, you may:

- 1) Sign up on our website www.oleander.org via PayPal
- 2) Venmo to @internationalOleander-Society
- 3) PayPal: International.oleander@yahoo.com
- 4) Email us at International.oleander@yahoo.com with your phone.
We will call you back to get your credit card number.
- 5) Mail your membership or donation to the address below:

International Oleander Society
P.O. Box 3431
Galveston, TX 77552-0431

Please indicate the membership of your choice and include both your mailing address, email address and phone.

Renewable Annually

- | | |
|----------------|----------|
| (1) Individual | \$20.00 |
| (2) Family | \$30.00 |
| (3) Lifetime | \$300.00 |
| (4) Business | \$100.00 |

(Business members will receive a certificate to display in their business, listing in our newsletter and on our website)

____ Or donation of any amount is appreciated.

THANK YOU