



NEW AND RETIRING OFFICERS of the Beverly Hills Women's Club chat informally during a cocktail, dinner and dancing party Saturday at the Forest Lake Country club. From left to right are: Mrs. Arthur Zebode, secretary; Mrs. John J. Powers, retiring president; Mrs. B. John Mitchell, incoming president; and Mrs. Charles D. Clark, chairman of the party which was planned for the women's husbands and paid for by a monthly \$2 fee per member. The fund was begun recently at suggestion of Mrs. Powers. (Eccentric Photo)

NATURE NOW

300 Types in Violet Family

By LYDIA KING FREHSE
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

The train gathers speed as it skirts the Lake Erie marshes. Now the magazine which holds an article lauding my native state lies unread in my lap.

Its journalistic style is nostalgic, and no native Ohioan could read it without a quickening of the pulses.

For Ohio is in truth the land of "pretty girls with their light wheat is knee-deep, a waving sea of green and the orchards and vineyards stand in neat geometric designs.

The blackberries bloom in the hedgerows and the flowering locust and horse chestnut march up the lanes to homes set apart on gentle knolls. Water hyacinths border the marshes and in the ditches the cow parsnip holds high its great white umbels.

The engine whistle sends out a warning and the wild ducks fly low. The redwings flash their bright epaulets in the late sun. A great blue heron lifts his deep bordered wings in slow flight.

Time now to dream awhile of places and people long beloved. Time too, to reckon the sober accomplishment of adulthood against the shining hopes and dreams of youth.

BACK AT MY desk once more

where the clean white sheet of paper waits.

Last week we gathered the last of the violets in the old orchard. Now the plants are lost for another season in the tangle of tall grasses.

No other spring flower is more loved. Of its 300 species at least 80 are widely dispersed in the United States in the shape of small herbaceous plants. In the tropics they become small trees and shrubs.

Because of hybridization the violet family presents a problem in identification. The varieties may be roughly divided into stemless, like the common and the birdfoot violet, or the leafy stemmed species represented by the yellow downy and the Canada violet.

THE IRREGULAR structure of the flower petals is an arresting one. They are arranged in two opposite pairs with a fifth and

plant which seeks out dry and sterile soil. It is difficult to transplant.

Often the middle pair is bearded and the heart of the flower is usually marked with dark lines to guide the pollinating insect to a store of hidden nectar.

Violets have an interesting seed producing habit. The conspicuous flowers which we pick are often sterile. Other fertile blooms are hidden low among the leaves where they bear rudimentary petals and are self-fertilizing without opening.

These are called cleistogamous flowers. So you may pick the violet at will. Nature has insured the species.

IT IS A highlight of our annual Decoration Day holiday to see the birdfoot violet abloom over acres of our northern cut-over timberland in company with the bright yellow puceon.

This is our largest violet, its pale lavender color offset by the orange of its anthers. Its lower petal is spurred and its white throat is veined with violet. In contrast to most of its kind, the birdfoot violet, is a sun-loving

plant which seeks out dry and sterile soil. It is difficult to transplant.

However most species of violets are an easy addition to the shaded wild flower garden. I have found Viola canadensis with its hardy branching stem and its delicately marked flowers and the sweet white violet (violet blanda) with its small fragrant flowers, especially satisfying.

Violets are sweet but their fragrance is elusive. Like their well-tended relatives the pansies, they are for remembrance.

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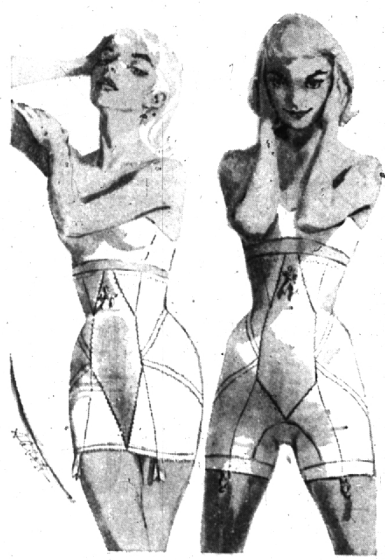
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