

How to Be an Expert on Mums

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

If you are establishing a new planting, remember it will take three years before your shrubs will give an appearance of maturity. In the interim of time, many gardeners place groupings of chrysanthemums which give a "filled-in" appearance at the feet of young shrubs.

It is easy to have an abundance of mums by dividing the plants you already have or those you may beg from your neighbors. Just lift a clod of earth with a mum plant in it. Now let it fall to the ground from a waist-high height. There you will have many broken pieces with roots to plant separately. Plants will be as big as a half-bushel basket later. Some portions now will be the size of a lead pencil.

THE IMPORTANT PART of this technique is to plant the mums in full sun. Now take your grass shears and "hutch off" the top to within three inches from the ground. Do this June first, then about July 4th cut off the tips to within five inches from the ground.

The first week in August, cut them off to within seven inches of the ground. Now you are an expert on mum culture if you remember to circle the plant with fertilizer at the time of the first and last shearing.

When you are going out to buy mums, it is very wise to select only the early varieties for this area. We have well-known growers in the area who can give their customers the approximate date of flowering.

Be sure to grow some of the Bells of Ireland as an annual in your garden this year. They are beautiful employed in water or dried.

The bells are not really flowers, but a part of the calyx which grows on the stems. These bells have leaves which come out from the groupings of bells and have to be removed for the best effect.

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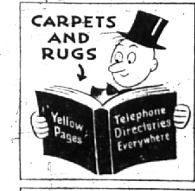
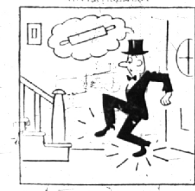
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tops, sticks them in the ground and soon has an interesting plant. The plant grows fast, has its fruit, and then dies.

THE HOUSEPLANTS we nurse along in small containers, such as shefflera, crown of thorns, pandanus, ficus pitosporum, and the whole collection of philodendrons grow high and abundantly outdoors there.

Their lawns have to be fertilized four times a year. In Florida to build a lawn they place two inches of lime rock over the sand, to hold the water, then cover this with two inches of muck. The lawn is started with plugs of soil, never beginning by seed.

This fine couple have found real pleasure in exploring for fine unusual plants in this life's cycle, known as the "easy years."

Couple Celebrate Silver Anniversary

Celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. Fred T. Simanek, Westchester Way, Birmingham, entertained 60 at Bonnie Brook country club Sunday.

Guests included their daughter, Mrs. James D. McKay, Jr. with her son, who traveled from Fayetteville, N. C.; another daughter, Mrs. Gerald Stuebler, her husband, and daughter, from Detroit.

Another daughter, Diane, who is still at home, assisted her parents. Monday Mr. and Mrs. Simanek and Diane left for a month's trip through the west.

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