DAHLIADEL IN THE MOUNTAINS

and

Mr. A. L. Freedlander



Waynesville, North Carolina December 2010

by

Bob and Martha Rapalje

DEDICATION



Mr. A.L. Freedlander



Mr. W.W. Maytrott



Warren and Aileen Maytrott (1967 or 68)

In memory of our grandparents Warren and Aileen Maytrott and Mr. A.L. Freedlander, who brought so much color to the world, who treated people with such kindness and respect, who gave so much of themselves and left us with so many memories.

DAHLIADEL of NEW JERSEY

It's hard to believe it was 47 years ago! It was 1963, the day after I graduated from high school, and my sister Janet and I were on the train headed for Dahliadel in Vineland, New Jersey! I am the first grandchild of Warren and Aileen Maytrott, founders and owners of the then famous Dahliadel. In about 1917, our grandfather converted his father's grape vineyard into the dahlia business originally called **Dahliadel Nurseries**, later shortened to **Dahliadel (of New Jersey!)**.

Our parents, John and Bunny Rapalje, had moved away from New Jersey when I was only one year old. So our contact with our grandparents was limited to a couple of weeks when we visited them in the summer, and a week or two when they came to visit us in Florida at Christmas. This particular summer, Grandma and Grandpa needed some help working in the fields of Dahliadel, so instead of two weeks, we were scheduled to stay in New Jersey for the entire summer. In fact, for this summer and the next three or four summers while I was in college, I would return to work at Dahliadel with the "men" of the field: Clarence Parsons, Charlie Starzer, Bill Labriola, my younger brother Jim, and of course our own Aunt Elsie (Greenhalgh).

When I arrived in early June, the men of the field would already be working in the cellar trimming roots that had been stored in root bins from the previous fall and preparing them for planting in the fields. After we divided and trimmed the roots, Clarence would open the furrows for planting with the tractor. We would then drop the roots in the furrow from baskets, and the furrow would then be covered, also by tractor. We also planted potted plants and pot-roots (i.e., roots that had been grown in pots the year before) in furrows, which were then covered by hand. The late season plants were re-potted into larger pots, which remained in the coal-frame until later. These became the pot-roots for the next year! (Special thanks to Aunt Elsie for helping me with these memories!)

As the dahlias and chrysanthemums grew in the fields, we had to top all of these plants so they could grow into bushes, and constantly hoe the weeds that seemed to grow even faster. In my first year, I remember that the weeds in the chrysanthemum patch got away from us, and Grandpa almost had it plowed under. We could hardly see the plants for the weeds. Fortunately, after long hours of hand weeding, we were able to save the mums! For the rest of the summer, we quoted Santa Claus, "Hoe, hoe, hoe!"

While summers in New Jersey were a lot cooler than in Florida, I remember that it did get hot in those fields! It was here that I became seriously motivated to succeed in my education and follow my calling to be a teacher! Most of all, I did not want to find myself doing manual labor covering dahlia roots at the age of 65!

Then, just about the time that the bushes began to look nice and begin flowering, it was time for me to go home and back to school in the middle of August. I always heard about these dahlia fields in September and October, ablaze with color, but I never got to see them! It seems that in every fall from 1950 until my retirement in 2007, I was either a student or a teacher in a Florida school! It's sad to say that dahlias just don't grow very well in the Florida climate, and as a result, we just don't have very many dahlias there. In fact, if I were to ask my Floridian friends if they know how large a dahlia grows, their response is, "a WHAT?? What's a dahlia?" Then I would say, "You know, a dahlia, like the flower! A dinner-plate sized dahlia!" The friends almost always would reply in extreme doubt, "Yeah, sure they do! NO flowers grow that big!" Well, according to Virginia Medford, our friend and an avid dahlia enthusiast from the Lake Junaluska area, she and her late-husband Billy B. certainly knew how large a dahlia can grow! Back in 1978 at the dahlia convention in Atlanta, Billy B. won the prize for the biggest dahlia in the show. It measured 14 inches across and 9 inches deep. Dahlias don't grow like that in Florida, that's for sure!

Of course dahlias grow very well in New Jersey. In addition to dahlias, New Jersey was filled with special memories from these days at Dahliadel when, as a very young man, I had these opportunities to live with Grandma and Grandpa, getting to know them and to be influenced by them on a day-to-day basis. There were the wonderful odors of roots in the cellars and farm equipment in the barns, freshly mowed grass, fireflies, Tastycakes, Breyers ice cream, cantaloupe (Grandpa could really tell when they were ripe and ready to cut!), and so many other things about the character and the values of our grandparents.

DAHLIADEL in the MOUNTAINS

In 1968, with our grandfather's health failing, the business was sold to A.L. (Abraham Lincoln) Freedlander, in Waynesville, North Carolina. Mr. Freedlander had been a regular customer of our grandparents for many years, and I understand that he already had quite a collection of dahlias at his estate somewhere in North Carolina. During this critical summer, I was not able to help out at Dahliadel, since I was in graduate school for the entire summer to complete my degree so I could begin teaching that fall. I remember hearing that they loaded everything on tractor-trailer trucks and moved Dahliadel to its new home in North Carolina, now to be called "Dahliadel in the Mountains." It was so sad to see the end of Dahliadel as we knew it. Even sadder, it never occurred to me, until it was about 40 years TOO LATE, to go visit the new home of Dahliadel in the mountains of North Carolina.

Now, suddenly it seems, the year is 2010! The time has passed quickly. My wife Martha and I were married in 1971, and I was busy with my career teaching mathematics for about 40 years in Florida community colleges, first at Lake Sumter Community College, and then 36 years at Seminole Community College, until my retirement in 2007. During the past 27 years or so,

Martha, our two sons Rob and Philip, and I made many trips to North Carolina. Most of our early visits were primarily focused in the Highlands/Franklin/Dillsboro area and Dillard, Georgia. The last few years we spent much of our time in the Maggie Valley/Waynesville area. For all these years, I never really thought very much about where Dahliadel in the Mountains had moved. It was like Dahliadel had moved to some mythical place—like Mayberry, NC. Only after several visits to Waynesville, did we finally began to ask the question, "Where in North Carolina did our beloved Dahliadel go?"! It was NOT an imaginary place. Dahliadel moved to a very real place—and it was very close to where we were staying! Here it was, Dahliadel in the Mountains, right HERE in WAYNESVILLE, North Carolina!

This past summer, with a few copies of old Dahliadel and Dahliadel in the Mountains catalogs to show around, Martha and I decided to look around in Waynesville to see what memories remained of Mr. Freedlander. We wondered what, if anything, remained of Dahliadel in the Mountains, after the death of Mr. Freedlander some years ago. With sporadic internet access where we were staying in Maggie Valley at the time, it was not easy, but we were nevertheless blessed with some very interesting results.

As a side bar, let me say that in nearly every trip that we took to the mountains of North Carolina especially when Rob and Philip were young, we used to get a jigsaw puzzle to put together as a family project. This was a very important part of our trips because it gave us something to do as a family, especially on rainy days and at night! Well, on this 2010 trip to Waynesville, Martha and I had a different kind of jigsaw puzzle—trying to discover what happened to Dahliadel.

When we started this "jigsaw puzzle," we didn't have ANY pieces to the puzzle. It's really HARD to put a puzzle together when you don't have any of the pieces. Finding the pieces of this 40 year-old puzzle was definitely the hardest part! However, once we began to find them, with all the help from the "family" of Dahliadel in the Mountains, it has been exciting to put the puzzle together! We are grateful to all who trusted us with their memories to help put this story together, in memory of our grandparents the Maytrotts and Mr. Freedlander. Now back to the puzzle!

We started with the Waynesville Genealogical Society. The gentleman there said he had been in town for less than a year, and he sent us across town to the Chamber of Commerce. From there we were sent to the Historical Society in the Haywood County Court House. From the Historical Society, we were sent to the North Carolina Room of the Haywood County Public Library. At first, no one seemed to have very much information about Mr. Freedlander, and no one had ever heard of Dahliadel in the Mountains. As I think back on this, we were asking about something that happened 40 years ago, way before the population boom in the North Carolina mountains caused by Floridians like Martha and me trying to escape the summer heat! Think about it! How many people now living in Waynesville were actually here 40 years ago? Everyone

younger than 40 is too young to remember anything about this subject. And besides this, we later learned that Dahliadel in the Mountains was only there for about 3 years before Mr. Freedlander passed away. It turns out that "Dahliadel in the Mountains," as it was officially called, probably lasted only from 4 to 8 years.

Anyway, we went from one end of Waynesville to the other, back and forth across town talking with folks who didn't know anything about what we were asking. But they all tried to point us in the right direction. So, the search for the first piece of the puzzle probably took several days—after all, we WERE on vacation! After a frustrating time of not really knowing where to look or how to get started, just before we decided to give up and go back home to Florida, we finally asked the reference librarians, one of whom was Joyce Cope, about the topics "Dahliadel in the Mountains" and "Freedlander." She gave us the telephone number of another reference librarian Stan Smith who was not there at the time, and she took my business card in case she came across any other information. The next day Joyce sent me an Email with a couple of additional telephone numbers to try, including the number of Haywood Community College, which is located just outside of Waynesville. I wondered, "Why would they give me the phone number of a community college?" What does this have to do with Mr. Freedlander? I later learned that this college has very much to do with Mr. Freedlander! Among other issues, the initial funding for the campus, which opened in August, 1965, (the very year that I graduated from a community college in Florida myself!) was provided by A.L. Freedlander.

The telephone number for the College that was given to me was the general telephone number, and I had no idea who I should ask for. Was it another librarian? Was it someone who had been there for a long time? Since my career was spent as a math teacher, I decided to ask for the Learning Center. Coincidentally, that just happened to be **Freedlander Learning Center!** Oh, and by the way, the College is located on **Freedlander Drive**. When I asked about dahlias, I was told that I should contact the Horticulture Department, which, they told me, is VERY active. There will be more on this topic later.

Next, I called Stan Smith, the reference librarian. He told me that his wife Peggy knew someone who had known Mr. Freedlander very well. He took my number and said he would call me if he learned anything. A few minutes later, Stan called me back, and Peggy told me that according to her friend, Dahliadel in the Mountains had been sold and subdivided after Mr. Freedlander passed away. She explained that the site was a very nice one to see, and she gave me directions to the site. I really had no intention of going there, since seeing the remains of MY Dahliadel in Vineland was sad enough, but I wrote down a sketchy description of how to get there. Something about several traffic lights outside of Waynesville, something about Allen's Creek Road, on Lickstone Mountain, with something to do with a Grandview something or other (it turns out, it was Grandview Lodge, a Bed and Breakfast, which has been on Lickstone Road for

over 75 years!)—I couldn't even read my own notes, but, as I said, I really didn't plan to go there anyhow.

The next day, July 2, we were at the local wireless internet café trying to get connected to the internet with some success, and having a latte of sorts. We spoke to a girl of college-age and asked her for directions to Haywood Community College. We also mentioned Dahliadel in the Mountains and the location we had been given. The girl assured us that it was a short distance, easy to find, and quite accessible. I reasserted my thought that I had no reason to go out there, but at Martha's insistence (she is usually right, you know!) we drove out in that direction.

We drove out of Waynesville in search of the site of Dahliadel in the Mountains as we were told we could do. We found Allen's Creek Road and saw the name of Lickstone Mountain on a sign, so we drove as far as we could up Lickstone Road.



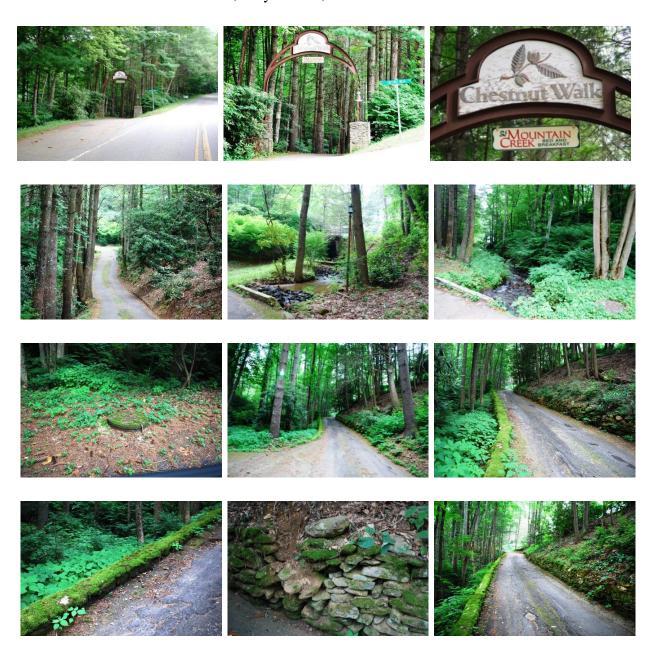
As we drove along, I jokingly commented that we needed to see some "senior citizen" out walking his dog or mowing his yard or something, someone with whom we could talk, someone who might recognize either of the two names we were researching. We went as far as we could go on Lickstone Road, so we turned around and headed back. A short distance later, I saw a man walking his dog! I quickly turned the car around—well, maybe it wasn't really "quickly". The way I drive, I don't dare do anything quickly driving on those mountain roads! Actually, I turned around too late, since by the time I got to him, the man and the dog had already reached their destination, and they were already in the house.

As I turned the car around again, I noticed another man who appeared to be finishing up mowing his yard. I stopped and asked him if he had ever heard of "Dahliadel in the Mountains." He said, "Yes!" Just across the street, just a few feet from where we stood, there was a road going off to the left side with an arch that read "Chestnut Walk." "Yes indeed," the man told me. "In the days before Mr. Freedlander passed away, there were acres of dahlias," he said, and he remembered very well that it was called "Dahliadel in the Mountains."

The man, who introduced himself to us, was Ed Leatherwood. He had moved to this location in 1963, and he had known Mr. Freedlander. Ed told us that we could indeed drive into the estate. We would see a tennis court and a building with a distinctive foundation, consisting of multicolored stones that Mr. Freedlander had brought in from various places. This had been Mr.

Freedlander's cottage. Ed suggested further that we might be able to talk with his gardener and caretaker for many years, who was still living in the area. His name was Wayne Garrett. Ed got out his phone book and gave us Wayne's number. I thought to myself, "What a break! We are either LUCKY or BLESSED!" I immediately concluded, "BOTH!" The Lord was with us this day!

So we thanked Ed and drove under the Chestnut Walk sign and into what remains of the original site of Dahliadel in the Mountains, Waynesville, North Carolina.



After driving a short distance down this quaint, heavily-shaded street called Chestnut Walk, we should have noticed a sign for the "Mountain Creek Bed and Breakfast" pointing to the right. On

our first couple of visits to Chestnut Walk, we were not aware of the original layout of Dahliadel in the Mountains, and we wondered if this might be a significant part of Mr. Freedlander's estate, or perhaps it was added later.

We drove over to the main buildings, and we could see that it was indeed a bed and breakfast.





According to the sign that we read, the bed and breakfast was "pet-friendly." We were met by the resident dog. This was obviously someone's "pet," but this "pet" didn't look very "friendly" to me! No one (except the dog!) was home, so we left not realizing until later that this was indeed a VERY significant part of our search.

It turns out that this building was built in 1950 by Mr. Freedlander to be used as a corporate retreat! Built on 5 acres, there are custom rock features, a large trout pond, waterfalls, rushing creeks, trails, an in-ground heated pool, Jacuzzi tubs, outdoor chimenea fireplaces, and private patios. The following 3 pictures are of the guest house of Mr. Freedlander from many years ago, provided by Mary Winner, who was one of Mr. Freedlander's switchboard operators and a good friend from the Waynesville Office.



The next picture is a current one of the Mountain Creek Bed and Breakfast.



Next, as we continued along Chestnut Walk, we saw the tennis courts. Back in the Freedlander days, this was probably the primary dahlia growing area, the area where Robert Matthews, who

worked with Mr. Freedlander, especially on his mower blades, told me that he dug 10,000 holes (with an auger!) to plant the dahlia roots!





Then, we saw three older gray buildings, one with a sign "Potting Shed", and another with an old Ford pickup truck (no Freedlander significance!) parked in front of it, a small piece of concrete in front of the rear tire. When we saw the words "Potting Shed" on one of the buildings, we knew we were in Dahliadel!

















Next, we could see the house with the foundation of multicolored stones, just as Ed had told us!







According to Ed, and also confirmed by others, this had been Mr. Freedlander's house. Wayne himself had helped lay the stones in this house as well as the stones in the guest house. The stones were imported from San Francisco and many other parts of the country.

There is a lesson here about Mr. Freedlander. He built a HUGE mansion (which is currently the previously mentioned Mountain Creek Bed and Breakfast) for his guests, known as the Guest House, with everything from fishing ponds and rushing creeks to a heated swimming pool, while the house he built for himself was a very simple house. The simple house was, nevertheless, colorful and distinctive! Furthermore, this mansion was not just reserved for kings and princes, the rich and famous, but it seems it was built for his employees as well--for his office staff and switchboard operators, who were very important to Mr. Freedlander, when he brought them from Dayton for a visit in the country!

There were other houses that we could see, but most of the land is now private property, and it is not really accessible to the public. As I was running around taking pictures, Martha sat in the car, listening to the birds and enjoying the peaceful sound of a stream that ran nearby. It was indeed a VERY nice location. Mr. Freedlander obviously had very good taste, and his love for color is immediately clear! As we prepared to leave, Martha said to me, "Get your mother some pine cones—pine cones from Dahliadel in the Mountains!"

On Tuesday, July 6, I visited the 83 acre campus of Haywood Community College, anxious to visit the Learning Center, and to see what I could learn about Mr. Freedlander and Dahliadel. Driving into the campus on Freedlander Drive, it is obvious that this is one beautiful campus!



The entrance is marked with a very large rock, carved in large letters "FREEDLANDER DR"! Continuing down Freedlander Drive is the intersection of Freedlander Drive and College Drive,

which goes to the administration building, overlooking Interstate 40 (prime real estate if you didn't notice!). Next to the administration building is "Building 200—Freedlander Learning Center!"









The name "Freedlander", the Arboretum, and dahlias are all over this campus! Talk about "LIVING COLOR"! Gardens and fountains are everywhere!







Everyone I with whom talked reminded me to be sure to come back in the fall, when the dahlias are in full-bloom! On our first visit in July, the dahlias were in place with the traditional 400

stakes, planted 2 to a hill, with over 250 varieties. At that time, the dahlias were between ankle and knee high, on schedule for the fall show in September and October!







Compare the pictures above of the fields at Haywood Community College in July to the pictures below from the September trip.







Then (back to the July visit!), I walked into the Campus Arboretum where the farm equipment is stored. In these barns, for the first time in over 40 years, I could smell the odors that I remembered so well from my grandfather's barns at Dahliadel in New Jersey!







Later that afternoon, it was time to call Mr. Wayne Garrett. I had spoken with someone at the Garrett home the day before and made arrangements to call him the next day. In my conversation with Wayne, he indicated that, from what he remembered, Dahliadel in the Mountains operated from 1968 until about 1974 or 1976, just a few years after Mr. Freedlander passed away in 1971 at the age of 82. He estimated that there had been about 20 acres of land, with four 30 to 40-foot greenhouses and root cellars. The grounds were kept mowed "like your front yard" with 22 lawnmowers. Mr. Freedlander also liked to drive the tractor. Together,

Wayne and Mr. Freedlander planted 1700 chestnut trees and pine trees on the property, hence the name "Chestnut Walk" over the road that leads into the estate.

It seems that there were quite a few snakes, especially rattlesnakes, in the area of Dahliadel in the Mountains. According to Wayne, there were a LOT of snakes and different varieties of snakes at that! One rattlesnake was measured to have been 13 inches around. It scared the people who saw it as they were driving down a hill so badly, that they jumped out of their jeep as it was running, and they beat the jeep to the bottom of the hill.

I asked Wayne what kind of man was Mr. Freedlander. Wayne replied, "Mr. Freedlander was an all around good fellow." As early as the 1950s, Mr. Freedlander would actually buy schools that were needed. He was very community minded. In 1958, he donated matching funds to enable the Haywood County Library to purchase a bookmobile. Mr. Freedlander was a wealthy man, with a very successful career in the Dayton Tire Company. He lived in Dayton, Ohio for part of the year, and part of the year in North Carolina, with a lot of travel back and forth. When he made money, he liked to give it back to the area in which he made it. Mr. Freedlander liked to use the concept of matching funds, in order to get the people involved in worthwhile causes. He was generous with his wealth, as evidenced by his contributions to Haywood Community College and other charities of North Carolina and Ohio. Numerous endowed scholarships of \$10,000, set up by A.L. Freedlander in both of these states, continue in his name to this day!

Mr. Freedlander also had a sense of humor. He would tell Wayne, "I smell rubber!" Wayne would reply, "What do you expect! You are standing in front of a rubber factory!" As a side note to this, Wayne told me that Mr. Freedlander had a total of 14 different factories! I think there may have been some confusion as to whether it was the smell of rubber or the smell of money!

With Mr. Freedlander, dahlias in Waynesville began as a hobby. His real career was in the tire business with Dayton Tires in Dayton, Ohio, his primary home. A.L. Freedlander joined Dayton Rubber (Manufacturing) company as chief chemist, engineer, and factory manager in 1919. In 1936, he became the company president. In 1957, he was named Chairman of the Executive Board, until stepping down to the position of Chairman of the Executive Committee and a director in 1968 (coincidentally, the same year that he brought Dahliadel to the mountains!). He held this position with DAYCO, a career of 52 years, until his death in 1971 in Dayton, Ohio. During this time, Mr. Freedlander filed 28 patents for his inventions, involving lawnmowers, mower blades, and rubber products, in particular the V-belt. He was quite an inventor.

According to Mary Winner, formerly from the Waynesville office, and other people who knew and worked for Mr. Freedlander, he was an exceptional chief executive officer! Unlike many CEOs today, he really cared for his employees! He counted those who worked in the front office

as his children, as family more or less. He was thoughtful and caring, the best kind of CEO ever. He would have never mistreated any employee. He was never pretentious or self-serving. Remember that while he was in Waynesville, Mr. Freedlander lived in a smaller, private place of his own, while providing all the luxury that money could buy for his guests.

Mr. Freedlander never married. According to Robert Matthews and others who knew him well, he was completely devoted to his company, working 12 to 14 hours per day. He said that he was "married" to the business, and that just wouldn't be fair to a wife! Mr. Freedlander did have a brother who was a surgeon in Cleveland, Ohio—and two lovely nieces!

Our grandfather Mr. Maytrott had a different view of marriage. He married our grandmother in 1918, forming a relationship that lasted 50 years until his death in 1969. They BOTH worked 12 to 14 hours a day! Our grandmother was every bit as dedicated to the business as our grandfather. As a child, I can remember that she got up at 5:00 a.m. every workday to pick up employees who came to town on the bus each morning. While the field workers left at 4:30 p.m. and the front office closed at 5:00, our grandparents lived on the second floor above the office, so they were really never far away from the business. I might add that the Maytrotts treated their customers and employees with the same kindness and hospitality that Mr. Freedlander did. Customers at both Dahliadel in New Jersey and Dahliadel in the Mountains were always treated as friends and guests, and employees were treated as family!

Our July trip to the mountains of Western North Carolina was over, and we headed back to our home in Central Florida. On the way home, I was able to speak by telephone with Doyle Justice, a retired professor of horticulture and the Arboretum at Haywood Community College. He confirmed to me that Joe H. Palmer, owner of the very large Palmer Farm on SR 209 in Crabtree, North Carolina, purchased Dahliadel in the Mountains prior to Mr. Freedlander's death in 1971. After some time, according to Virginia Medford, Joe moved the dahlias from the Chestnut Walk area down to his farm in Crabtree on the other side of Waynesville. We completed our trip to North Carolina with most of our questions answered. However, we still didn't know what happened to Dahliadel in the Mountains and the dahlias after 1971.

Our family has catalogs from Dahliadel in the Mountains from 1968, 1970-71, and 1971-72. The 1968 Catalog lists A.L. Freedlander as "Manager"; the 1970-71 Catalog lists "R. Bright" (that would be Mr. Freedlander's long-time secretary and assistant Rufina Bright, who passed away just a couple of years ago in Waynesville) as the "Resident Manager"; and the 1971-72 Catalog lists Joe H. Palmer as the "Owner" of Dahliadel in the Mountains. Selected pages from these catalogs are included at the end of this paper. Perhaps the 1971-72 Catalog was the last one! When I spoke with Elise Palmer, Joe's widow, she said that she does not remember any others.

It is with great sadness that Elise and Joe's son John recall that there was a flood! They do not remember the date that it happened, but at some time after the dahlias were all removed from Mr. Freedlander's site at Chestnut Walk to the farm in Crabtree, there was a terrible flood! The dahlias were all in the fields at the time, and they were all lost in the flood. None of the dahlias survived! We believe most of the dahlias were on the Palmer farm in Crabtree when the flood occurred, but some were at a site that is now a soccer field for children of Junaluska Elementary School. This field is now in a "no building zone" due to its susceptibility to flooding.

In an attempt to establish how long Dahliadel in the Mountains lasted, I inquired as to when any major flooding might have taken place in the Waynesville area. Charles Miller, who lives near Chestnut Walk and who at one time worked for Mr. Freedlander as a plumber, explained that flooding in the mountains is quite different from flooding in the flatlands. In the mountains you can have a local flood without having major flooding of larger proportions! It was also confirmed to me that the Crabtree and Clyde area frequently has problems with flooding.

According to Rick Wooten from the Geological Survey, there was major flooding in the Western North Carolina Mountains on two occasions during the 1970s. The dates given to me by Rick were May 26-27, 1973, and November 5-7, 1977. Since Virginia Medford remembered visiting the dahlias at the Palmer farm with her husband for several years after Joe moved them there, the flooding must have been a few years after 1973. Because Elise Palmer confirmed that the flooding she remembered was severe, it seems that the flooding that ended Dahliadel in the Mountains was most likely November 5-7, 1977!

What a tragedy this was! If this was the flood of 1977, then the loss was much more than dahlias! It may have been this same flood or a similar flood, but 5 to 7 inches of rainfall on these dates in northern Georgia caused the failure of the Kelly Barnes Dam in Toccoa, Georgia, resulting in 39 deaths and \$2.8 million in damages as a result of this flash flood (Paulson and others, 1991). As with most flooding, there is no warning, and there was nothing that Joe Palmer could have done to save the dahlias. The dahlias were just washed away—gone!

Yes, the dahlias were all gone, but the memories remain! And dahlias continue to grow and bloom at Haywood Community College, thanks to the efforts of John Palmer and Billy B. Medford to place them there. A memorial sign was placed at the College that read:

Summer of 1981
First Dahlia Garden
Founded by A.L. Freedlander
in memory of his famous Waynesville dahlia gardens
Dahliadel in the Mountains

To this date in year 2010, the dahlia gardens in North Carolina continue to grow!

Virginia and Billy B. Medford

We returned to the Waynesville/Maggie Valley area for a few days in the middle of September. During this time, we were able to meet a few of the wonderful people who helped us learn more about Mr. Freedlander and to discover what happened to Dahliadel in the Mountains. We made some lasting friendships in this visit, but let me tell you about the Medfords. Virginia Medford had already been very helpful in collecting information about the last years of Dahliadel in the Mountains in several telephone contacts that we had with her. She had already told us about her husband Billy B, who together with John Palmer, was instrumental in establishing the previously mentioned Dahlia Garden at Haywood Community College. It seems that Billy B. must have developed a severe case of "dahlia-fever." After meeting Virginia, it's pretty obvious, that the "fever" has passed on to her as well. Actually, after seeing all the dahlias in BLOOM at the Community College, I seem to have a touch of the "fever" myself!



By telephone conversation, Virginia had told us that for the past several years, she has been creating a dahlia scrapbook in memory of her beloved husband Billy B. She recalls that in the late 1960s, she brought home a dozen dahlia roots (tubers) for Billy to plant in a row of their vegetable garden. Billy wanted to know, "What are those? They look like dried-up sweet potatoes!" He planted them, and they must have grown fairly well for him. The next year, there were two rows, and the next year there were three! Soon, there were NO vegetables—nothing but dahlias in the garden and on the entire lot next door! About this time, Billy heard that Mr. Freedlander had bought the dahlia farm from the Maytrotts in New Jersey. Every fall at the peak of dahlia season, Mr. Freedlander held his "Open Garden" at Dahliadel in the Mountains. The Medfords became regular visitors to Mr. Freedlander's garden, and their love for dahlias grew!

A dahlia grower from Candler named Howard Morgan saw and became impressed with Billy's dahlias, and he convinced Billy that he should SHOW some of them, instead of just growing them for fun and family! So, on a Saturday morning at 3:00 a.m., Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, Billy,

and Virginia left for Chattanooga, Tennessee, with 2 five gallon buckets of dahlias for Billy's first dahlia show. Billy won 5 or 6 blue ribbons! This was just the beginning! Howard Morgan, Gilly Simmons and Bob Keesling, both from South Carolina, and Billy B. Medford went on to establish the **Carolinas Dahlia Society**, of which Billy B. was named the very first president! The year after Billy passed away, Virginia Medford was named president.

As previously mentioned, Billy won an award for the largest dahlia in the Atlanta show in 1978. Over the next several years, Virginia estimates that Billy won about 100 trophies and awards, most of which were donated back to the dahlia organizations to be re-used. We were intrigued by the pictures of Billy working among his dahlia bushes, some of which were sheltered by open umbrellas. Virginia told us that he would go to yard sales and flea markets looking for extra, colorful umbrellas to protect his dahlias from the rain and sun.

It is obvious to us that this passion for dahlias did not pass away with our grandparents Warren and Aileen Maytrott, or with A.L. Freedlander, or with Billy B. Medford! It continues today with Virginia Medford and many, many other dahlia enthusiasts. You should see the beautiful pink dahlia quilt that Virginia made for Billy B. Then Billy volunteered her to make another dahlia quilt in purple to be raffled off as a fund-raiser for the Dahlia Society—it raised \$1750! You should see the stained glass picture of a dahlia that she made. You should see the artificial dahlia arrangements in her room and the dahlia pictures on her walls! Then, finally you should see this amazing scrapbook containing all the pictures of Billy B. and his wonderful dahlias! Virginia REALLY loves her dahlias, even as she still loves her Billy B. She has so much to show and so many stories to tell about them both!

After we had seen all of Virginia's dahlia collectibles, she accompanied us to Haywood Community College to take pictures of the dahlias there. A few of these pictures are included at the end of this paper. As I concluded in the last section, indeed "the dahlia gardens in North Carolina continue to grow!"

CONCLUSION

After working on this project for the past several months, we finally found enough pieces of the puzzle to put it all together. Our grandfather Warren Maytrott and Mr. Freedlander were both so passionate about dahlias, and both must have been fanatics when it came to color! Our grandfather, with help from his daughter Elsie M. Greenhalgh (our Aunt Elsie!), created the Dahliadel Color Chart, which was recognized and used in the American Dahlia Society as their official color chart for many years. From 1917 to 1968, our grandfather built an incredible career with dahlias. He had a name and reputation for quality dahlias. The colors of these dahlias were incredible, and we do have some wonderful color pictures from this era, especially during the 1930s. However, the Dahliadel catalogs from New Jersey were necessarily in black and white.

Then, as our grandfather's life and the Dahliadel of New Jersey began to close around 1968 or 1969, Mr. Freedlander stepped in. With the money to produce full-color catalogs, Mr. Freedlander brought the dahlias of Warren and Aileen Maytrott to the mountains of North Carolina. Here he was able to create an incredible dahlia farm in this setting, absolutely ablaze with mountains in the background and the colored leaves of fall at the very season when the dahlias also reach their peak in color! What a combination! We can only imagine—we wish we could have seen it!

Unfortunately, this wonderful display lasted only a few short years and very few people who now live in the Asheville/Waynesville area even remember it—even fewer were able to see it. So, let's try to remember what was here—a veritable Camelot of dahlias! What an amazing display of color it must have been!

Only heaven can do better!

EPILOG

Remember the words of the well-known song by Celine Dion, "It's all coming back to me . . .". Yes, on the summer trip to North Carolina, visiting Maggie Valley and Waynesville, it WAS all coming back to me! In the evenings in North Carolina, there was the smell of freshly mowed grass, just like New Jersey. As summer nights fell around us each evening, there were fireflies all over Maggie Valley and Waynesville—just like in New Jersey! As I walked into a barn on the campus of Haywood Community College, there were all of the distinctive aromas from the barns of Dahliadel and memories that I had not had in over 42 years. The "Potting Shed" and pine trees from Dahliadel in the Mountains, the colors of dahlias, and the colored stones brought to North Carolina by A.L. Freedlander bring to mind the dahlias and the Dahliadel Color Chart brought to New Jersey by Warren W. Maytrott.

I'm so thankful for the memories that I have from my childhood and my youth, and for the opportunity to write these thoughts in memory of the great men and women who have gone before us. Now that they have passed away, what can we do to preserve the memories and contributions of these great men/women?

What is important is that as adults we still have memories that we can cherish from our own childhood. We have memories of mothers, fathers, grandparents, and perhaps even great-grandparents, aunts and uncles. With these memories, we are connected to our ancestors, which this gives us a sense of belonging to an extended family, with memories to pass down to the next generations.

Let's also remember people like Mr. Freedlander who didn't leave any children or grandchildren to remember them or carry on their family traditions. Nevertheless, in his life, he gave more to worthwhile charities than most of us earn in our lifetimes! The name "Freedlander" is much more than the name of a street or the name on a rock at the entrance to Haywood Community College. We should tell the people of North Carolina (and Ohio!) that he was a generous chief executive officer who really cared about his employees. We should treat the people that we meet in our own lives with such respect and compassion. We should work as hard to develop our own God-given talents, and use these talents to give back to our communities in creative ways like Mr. Freedlander did!

Let's tell our families and friends! Let's share these thoughts and memories of the Maytrotts' **Dahliadel** in New Jersey that moved to Waynesville, NC to become Mr. Freedlander's **Dahliadel** in the Mountains!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to all the North Carolina folks who, with the kindness and generosity of Mr. Freedlander, assisted with our search, in order of appearance:

Joyce Cope—reference librarian at the Haywood County Public Library

Stan and Peggy Smith—reference librarian, insights about Mr. Freedlander and Dahliadel in Mt **Edward and Polly Leatherwood**—Dahliadel in the Mountains neighbor

Wayne Garrett—Mr. Freedlander's gardener

Mike Meadows—Haywood Community College Arboretum

Doyle Justice—retired horticulture instructor from HCC, formerly the Arboretum

Mary Winner—switchboard operator, friend of Mr. Freedlander at Dahliadel in the Mountains

John Palmer—formerly Arboretum, son of Joe Palmer, former owner of Dahliadel in Mountains

Robert Matthews—worked with Freedlander on mower blades, a lot of time in Dahliadel in Mt.

Virginia Medford—widow of Billy B., who coordinated the Garden at HCC for many years

Elise Palmer—widow of Joe Palmer, former owner of Dahliadel in the Mountains

Charles Miller—lives near Chestnut Walk, at one time worked for Mr. Freedlander in plumbing

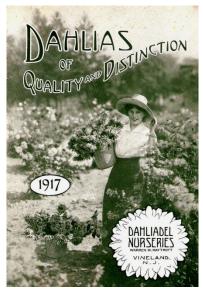
Rick Wooten—Geologic Survey, Asheville Regional Office

Tonya Nifong—formerly worked with the Arboretum at HCC

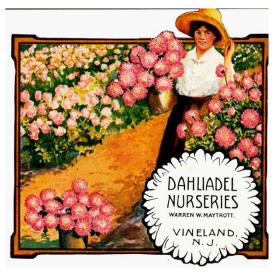
Emma Maytrott Rapalje—"Mom" proof-reader par excellent! She was trained by her father W.W. Maytrott himself! Thanks for correcting so many errors in this paper!

Elsie Maytrott Greenhalgh—"Aunt Elsie" thanks for so many years of service to Dahliadel of New Jersey. We offer special thanks for helping recall the memories, and identifying the dahlia types and varieties from the pictures we took at Haywood Community College.

Philip Rapalje—Our Son—Thank you for all your help in formatting and printing the final copies of this paper.



Dahliadel New Jersey Catalog 1917



Dahliadel New Jersey Catalog (circa 1926)



Display for Dahlia show set up by Dahliadel New Jersey (circa 1930s)



Display by Dahliadel New Jersey (circa 1930s)



Dahliadel in the Mountains (circa 1970)
Thanks to Mary Winner

DAHLIADEL IN THE MOUNTAINS 1968

presents
the world's "mountain grown"
Dahlias illustrated in full color

SAVE THIS CATALOG FOR COLOR REFERENCE

Beautiful, Brand New 1968 Introductions

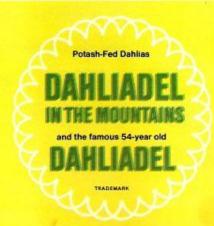


HAPPY BIRTHDAY (Veile-Dahliadel), A, FD, EM, Bloom 9-10 x 6", Bush 4 ft. Most pleasing dark blend of apricot edged and veined China rose. Strong stems, sure to be a winner on the show table. Certified Detroit. Root: \$10.00; Pot Root: \$7.50; Plant: \$3.50



MARY MARTIN (Veile-Dahliadel), A-B, IC, EM, Bloom 8-9 x 5½", Bush 3½ ft. Attractive light blend, apricot with yellow at center. Beautiful form with laciniated petals. Has stiff, strong stems. A favorite with our visitors. Certified two trials. Root: \$10.00; Plant: \$3.50

None of the photographs in this catalog are retouched.



Two major producing areas combine to become one of the world's largest Dahlia growing operations

Dahliadel in the Mountains, Box 990, Waynesville, N. C. 28786 Dahliadel, Vineland, New Jersey 08360



PHILLIP

ALTA BISHOP





ANTIETAM

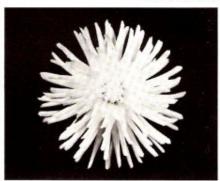




STORMY

AUTUMN CHOICE





IVIS

LORI L





DAHLIADEL BEE

BRIDAL VEIL

Additional 1968 Introductions

PHILLIP (Frank-Dahliadel), B, StC, M, Bloom 7 x 5", Bush 41/2 ft. An exciting dark red almost Chrysanthemum crimson with a lighter reverse. Laciniated petals. Profuse and excellent growth all season. Not sent to any Trials but released on its own merits. Sure to please.

Root: \$7.50; Plant: \$2.50

ALTA BISHOP (Mason-Yano-Dahliadel), Single, E, Bloom 3¾", Bush 3½ ft. Striking and profuse cardinal red with base of petals yellow making a halo at center. Strong graceful stems of good proportion. A real winner in '66 and first in four shows winning the Lynn B. Dudley Metal for Min. '67. Certified in 3 Trials. Root: \$3.00; Pot Root: \$2.25; Plant: \$1.50

ANTIETAM (Phillips-Dahliadel), M, FD, E, Bloom 3 x 21/2", Bush 21/2 ft. Chrysanthemum crimson darker at center, Achievement award in Richmond. Certified at Atlanta. Mr. Webb recommends.

Root: \$3.00; Plant: \$1.50

SLIGO (Phillips-Dahliadel), M, ID, E, Bloom 31/2 x 3", Bush 31/2 ft. Charming Empire yellow with wavy serrated petals. Good for cutting. Seedling Sweepstakes winner at Paramus and scored 86.16 at Richmond, Certified at Pacific Coast and Eastern Trials, Mr. Webb recommends.

Root: \$3.00; Plant: \$1.50

STORMY (Mason-Yano-Dahliadel), BB, SC-StC, ML, Bloom 5 x 3", Bush 3 ft. At-tractive Tyrian purple. Full of petals that round to the back. Excellent grower and a winner in Paramus, Philadelphia, Washington and Richmond this year.

Root: \$5.00; Plant: \$2.00

AUTUMN CHOICE (Dahliadel), M. FD, E, Bloom 41/2 x 3", Bush 3 ft. Empire yellow with salmon outside and a coral pink suffusion. Slightly serrated petals of good depth. A blooming fool, good root maker and keeper. We want everyone to enjoy this lovely variety. Root: \$1.50

IVIS (Dahliadel), M, StC, M, Bloom 4 x 3", Bush 4 ft. Charming amaranth rose shaded lighter and white at tips, Great depth and good growing habits. Unusual. Root: \$3.00; Plant: \$1,50

LORI L. (Frank-Dahliadel), BB, StC, EM, Bloom 5 x 21/2", Bush 31/2 ft. Wonderful profuse white for cutting with excellent substance. Good full centers and fine position. Winner at Paramus and Irvington shows for 3 or 4 years,

Root: \$5.00; Plant: \$2.00

DAHLIADEL BEE (Dahliadel), M, FD, EE, Bloom 3 x 2", Bush 31/2 ft. Pleasing Rhodamine pink with excellent qualities for cutting. Never exhibited so try it with us. This little beauty is always full of blooms. Root: \$3.00; Plant: \$1.50

BRIDAL VEIL (Mason-Dahliadel), B, IC, M, Bloom 8 x 5", Bush 4 ft, Outstanding white with orchid purple stripes and darker center. Great depth and nice form. Opens beautifully. Certified Mid-Central 85.5.

Root: \$7.50; Plant: \$2.50

Copyright 1968, Dahliadel in the Mountains

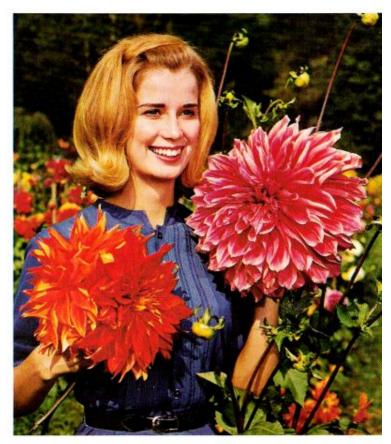
Before showing you many more of our outstanding Dahlias– let us introduce ourselves



Here is a view of just part of the large acreage devoted to developing and growing Dahlias at "Dahliadel in the Mountains." Note that we are one of the few, if not the only one of the larger producers, who stake such tremendous numbers—approximately 10,000 plants. It might interest you to know that our staking permits us to grow many plants over 8 feet tall.



Probably the most beautiful spot at "Dahliadel in the Mountains" is the 'five colored fountains' 30 feet high which create a veritable Dahlia fairyland. These fountains are open to the public on special occasions.



For the past ten years "Dahlladel in the Mountains" has been scientifically developing and growing magnificent Dahlias, to a great extent from stock supplied by Dahliadel. Dahliadel in Vineland, New Jersey, has been producing Dahlias of quality and distinction continuously for 54 years. So you might say we possess 64 years of experience in growing Dahlias. Furthermore, "Dahliadel in the Mountains" works closely with the State University of North Carolina.

Under the guidance of Dahliadel in Vineland, New Jersey, we are now ready for commercial operation. We are concentrating at present on the larger Dahlias, although we do extremely well on the smaller ones, too.

Dahliadel of Vineland has been supplying Dahlias to thousands of selected customers in all sections of the world. Their tremendous enthusiasm over the results they have attained is evidenced by the repeat orders from year to year.

"Dahliadel in the Mountains" is located near Asheville at elevations up to 4,000 feet in the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains region at Waynesville, North Carolina. Waynesville is the gateway to the famous Smoky Mountain National Park—the most popular National Park in the United States. In 1967 over five million people visited this park. The area in which we are located is acclaimed as one of the very best for growing Dahlias.

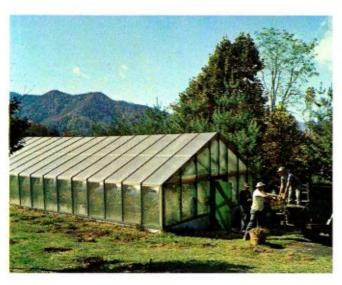
Most plants, especially Dahlias, do exceptionally well in this location because mountain air is purer, less polluted, with a heavy morning mist. Furthermore, nights are cool and nature supplies a generous amount of rainfall which is 20% greater than in most areas. Besides, our mountain location means we have good drainage at all times. Therefore, we have a good crop, year after year because our roots never rot in the ground like Dahlias grown in flat country when rainfall is heavy and drainage inadequate. The combination of "mountain growing" and potash feeding results in Dahlia stock which is hardier and produces what we believe are the most magnificent Dahlias obtainable anywhere.

"Dahliadel in the Mountains" has produced its catalog in full color and is offering it to the public free of charge, Full color enables you to visualize much better what each specific Dahlia looks like. We are confident this catalog will be helpful to you in making your selections from our fine collection of Dahlias.

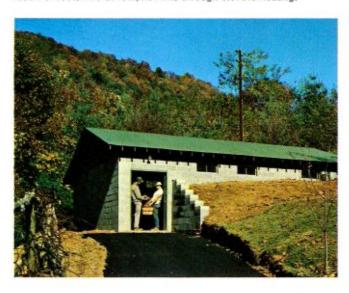
Enclosed you will find a convenient order blank and envelope addressed to us.

We make you this promise—that you will be delighted, even thrilled, by every "mountain-grown" Dahlia you purchase from "Dahliadel in the Mountains," and by every Dahlia you purchase from Dahliadel at Vineland. New Jersey.

On the right are Sandy and Mac—our two show-type Collies—who give an enthusiastic, tail-wagging welcome to all visitors at "Dahliadel in the Mountains." Our mountain scenery and our Dahlias are just as beautiful as they are.



This is one of our seven new greenhouses. They are all heated electrically. While this method of heating is much more excensive, it gives more even temperature control. We want you to know that we have spared no expense to bring you the finest Dahlias in the world. Not long ago we completed a specially-built root storing building. Humidity and temperature must be critically controlled for the best preservation of roots. We accomplish this through electric heating.





OUR GUARANTEE

All Dahlia Roots, Pot Roots and Plants are guaranteed healthy and true to name to the extent of replacement with true stock. Roots or pot roots that fail to start in three weeks after planting will be replaced if returned. Dahlia Plants received in poor condition must be reported within one week. POTASH FED DAHLIAS give such universal satisfaction that we guarantee this year's Dahliadel Introductions to prove entirely satisfactory to the extent of replacement with the same variety or one of any other equal value from the following season's catalog. Satisfaction and safe delivery guaranteed.

Abbreviations Indicating Classification

Type of Flower

An Anemone
Ba Ball
Coll Collarette
Dwf Dwarf
FD Formal Dec.
Coll Collarette
Dvf Dwarf
Dvf Dwarf
Coll Collarette
Dvf Dwarf
Dvf

Size A or large, over 8 inches. B or medium, 6 to 8 inches. M or miniature, under 4 inches. BB 4 to 6 inches.

Blooming Time, E, M, L (Early, Medium, Late)

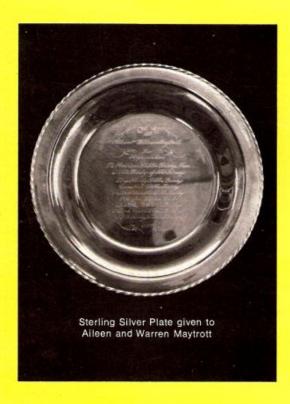
Color Abbreviations

Bi Bi-Color L Lavender R Red
Br Bronze Lt Bl Light Blend Var Variegated
Dk Bl Dark Blend Or Orange W White
Dk R Dark Red Pk Pink Y Yellow
Fi Bi Flame Blend Pr Purple

DAHLIADEL IN THE MOUNTAINS 1968

"Where Nature's Soft Water Grows Dahlias of Distinction"

DAHLIADEL IN THE MOUNTAINS, Box 990, Waynesville, North Carolina 28786



In October, 1967, on Maytrott Day, friends and delegates from 9 of the immediate area Societies presented Aileen and Warren Maytrott with this gorgeous Sterling Silver Plate engraved as follows:

TO
AILEEN AND WARREN MAYTROTT
IN
APPRECIATION

The American Dahlia Society, Inc.
Dahlia Society of New Jersey
Bergen County Dahlia Society
Connecticut Dahlia Society
Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society
Irvington Garden Club
Mid-Island Dahlia Society
National Capital Dahlia Society
North Jersey Dahlia Society
1967

"I think the above engraved Sterling Silver Plate given to Aileen and Warren Maytrott (who served six years as President of the American Dahlia Society) by some of their thousands of admirers is a fitting tribute to a wonderful couple who have dedicated over 54 years of their lives to developing and growing Dahlias for the enjoyment of people all over the world. We are proud to be associated with them and to help carry on the work and reputation that they have established worldwide."

a L. Freedlander

A. L. Freedlander, Manager Dahliadel in the Mountains

Dahliadel in the Mountains Catalog 1971-72



Dahlias at Haywood Community College, September 20-22, 2010

Numbers refer to my own photo numbers, the order in which pictures were taken!



Cinnabar 2799
 AA Giant, Semi -Cactus, Red ADS



2. Alpen Mary Lou 2831A Large, Semi-Cactus, Bronze/Orange ADS



Drummer Boy 2829
 A Large, Formal Decorative, Red ADS



4. Anna 2794B Medium, Informal Decorative, Variegated, White/Red ADS



5. Babylon Red 2795B Medium, Formal Decorative, Red ADS



 Bert Pitt 2765
 B Medium, Informal Decorative, Bicolor, Dark Red/White ADS



7. Castle Drive 2720B Medium, Formal Decorative, Light Blend, Pink/Yellow ADS



Glen Valley Cactus 2725
 BB Small, Semi-Cactus, Yellow/Red



11. Orion 2731 **BB Small,** Informal Decorative, Light Blend **ADS**



 Connecticut Dancer 2767
 BB Small, Formal Decorative, Variegated, White/Dark Red ADS



10. Just Peachy 2731
BB Small, Semi-Cactus, Light Blend, Pink/Yellow ADS



12. Parkland Rave 2869 **BB Small,** Miniature, Straight Cactus,
Lavender **ADS**



13. Alpen Joy 2740 **Miniature,** Semi-Cactus, White/Purple **ADS**



14. Alpen Lindsey 2712 **Miniature**, Semi-Cactus, Pink **ADS**



15. Fuzzy Wuzzy 2760 **Miniature,** Formal Dec, Bicolor, Pink/White **ADS**



16. Pineapple Lollipop 2758
Miniature, Formal Decorative, Yellow YL11
ADS



17. Weston Spanish Dancer 2729
Miniature, Straight Cactus, Flame Blend, Red/Yellow ADS



18. Cornel 2790 **BALL,** Dark Red, DR3 **ADS**



19. Polventon Supreme 2729 BALL, Yellow, YL11 ADS



20. Hy Suntan 2860
Miniature BALL, Bronze, BR3 ADS



21. Parkland Glow 2878 Single, Dark Red ADS



22. Pooh 2751
Collarette, Bicolor, Orange/Yellow ADS



23. Lauren Michelle 2741 Water Lily, Lavender ADS



24. Keith H. 2768
Water Lily, Yellow/Red ADS