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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

**SHARING
SECRETS**

APRIL 2008

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“What got you interested in gardening or growing plants?”

More wonderful responses to our last question.

They say necessity is the mother of invention. In my case it's the birth of gardening. I'm not sure if that necessity was of the soul or of a more practical matter. Born in St. Louis, I would sneak into my great aunt's fabulous Victorian garden when she was not home (children were not allowed there alone). I would also frequently beg my mother to take me to the Missouri Botanical Garden, my favorite place in the city, then and now.

Much later in life when I acquired my own piece of land it turned out to be a double lot on a steep hillside covered with 50 *Yucca gloriosa* trees and huge rotting opuntias. This would not do. Of necessity, I will be gardening forever. - *CN*

I always dabbled in gardening, but I got serious about learning about plants when I worked on two exhibits on native California plants for a natural history museum. The exhibits displayed plants used in basketry and California butterfly plants. - *LB*

My mother used to let me pick flowers from her Detroit garden when I was about six. After I pulled up an entire plant, she showed me how to carefully pick one of her favorite flowers, Wood Violets (some now reside in my garden). I cherished the fresh vegetables that I helped my dad gather from his annual “salad” garden for our meal, especially those tasty tomatoes. I got to help him plant, too. - *DBG*

My parents rented an apartment across the street from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden when I was seven. I could cross the street myself to their lovely Japanese garden and large grounds. Wintertime in their greenhouses I took lessons in potting and eventually, each Spring, I was given a Victory Garden plot where my best friend and I raised vegetables. - *JC*

Buying a house 30 + years ago with no knowledge of the plants we had, I called the Dept. of Agriculture to come to the house and give me an education. The rest is history. - *EF*

I must have been seven or eight years old when my mother and father re-landscaped our Bellflower backyard in the Japanese style, which was all the rage then. They had taken a local gardening class together and decided mossy mounds with little contorted black pines, swales of black Mexican beach pebbles, nandinas and fiberglass "shoji screens" on our patio were the artistic result of their lessons in tasteful design. We children thought it pretty interesting since no one else's yard looked anything like it. But the really big deal was the clivia plant they perched on top of one of the mounds. We hovered over it for what seemed months (or years!) waiting for the first flowers. My parents made such a big fuss when it finally bloomed that I think it was my first strong memory associated with a cultivated plant and set the stage for my later interest in gardening. Indeed, this watching and waiting day by day fostered a general attention to all natural cycles and their slow unfolding by the season that I still enjoy - *SR*

My mother gave me carrot seeds to plant at age six. - *MP*

My uncle and I started a vegetable and fruit tree garden when I was young, or "younger." I took courses at Pierce and Cal Poly Pomona and graduated in 1975. Then I worked at Westwood Nursery and Merrihew's Nursery before I went and started my own nursery. - *GK*