

## gardener's book nook

### Marty Figley

"Once Upon a Windowill." Tovah Martin (Timber Press, \$29.95, hardcover), is a fascinating account of how houseplants came to be grown in homes. Although herbs were the first plants to be overwintered indoors, their use was functional rather than beautiful; they were taken indoors just to keep them alive.

The 19th Century and the Victorian era were ripe for plants such as the Boston fern, bulbs, tropicals and foliage plants to be grown indoors. With the invention of central heating plants could more easily survive in the home.

Much credit for the proliferation

of houseplants is given to garden writers and mail order businesses. As plant hunters searched for more varieties, the housewife was eager to grow their findings.

When I read a book I often mark pages I may want to refer back to. As I read this energetic book, there were several things in each chapter that required a mark. No part of the history of houseplants has been omitted — from the small beginnings to conservatories and greenhouses, all of it is quite remarkable. I recommend this one for reading on a cold winter's evening. Order from: Timber Press, Inc., 9999 SW Wilshire,

Portland, Or., 97225; \$3 extra for postage and handling.

A BEAUTIFUL VOLUME, "The Prentice Hall Encyclopedia of Garden Flowers, Anita Perle (40 hardcover) will be used for reference again and again. It's an impressive book with more than 1,000 garden flowers with color photos and information about more than 2,000 flowering species. It should be kept in a handy place. In addition to the "meat" of the book (the encyclopedic part) chapters are devoted to soil, cultivation, foliage (colors, seasonal), flowers (colors, scent, self-seed-

ing); seasonal blooms; details (ground-covers for rose bushes, naturalizing and terrace) special areas and what to plant; and finally problems that may arise. In each chapter, the author lists her choices to deal with the situation.

The latter part, an invaluable guide, contains 34 pages of tables so that the gardener can quickly see specific information about the plants. Headings are: soil types, conditions, foliage, flowers, flowering season, decorative uses, other uses and problems.

A garden designer, Perle acknowledges that beds and borders

can cause concern for amateur gardeners, so she devotes space to guide the reader to success.

"The Door Yard," edited by Donald J. Berg, (Ten Speed Press, PO Box 7123, Berkeley, Ca. 94707, \$7.95) is a delightful book devoted to the tried and true methods of gardening. The advice is taken from 19th Century farm journals, garden books and catalogs. Besides being practical it is fun reading. Instructions for making what was probably the first garden seat are given. Although cumbersome, it must have worked. The maroon cover with gold lettering would make a handsome addition to the book shelf.

SIMON & SCHUSTER'S Guide to Orchids, Alberto Fanfani and Rossi Walter, (Fireside Books, \$13.95 paper) is one of the Nature Guide Series. The instructions take the guesswork out of growing these exotic plants. Included are 250 color photos of more than 160 cultivated species.

I would consider this a perfect reference book for orchid lovers.

A small, but very informative book, "Flowers That Last Forever," Betty E. Jacobs (Garden Way Publishing, \$9.95, paper) describes 31 plants and six ornamental grasses that can be dried for future use and continued enjoyment. It is divided into three parts.

Part I describes the plants (with excellent line drawings, gives growing conditions, when to harvest, the preferred method of drying and how they are best grown, from seeds or vegetatively propagated).

Part II details the various methods for preserving the flowers and includes lists of plants that can be air dried or preserved with silica gel, for quick reference.

Part III is full of ideas of the mechanics to achieve a finished product with the preserved materials. The author, who has had much hands-on experience, has written several books about herbs.



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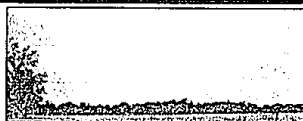
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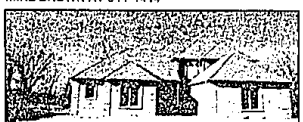
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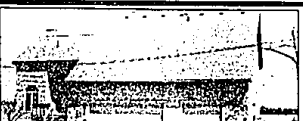
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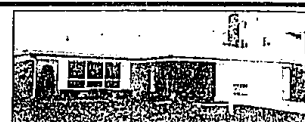
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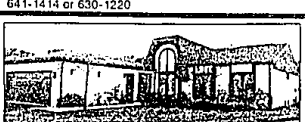
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