JAY DODSON
1900–1999

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Jay was born on November 24, 1900, in Browning, Missouri. When a baby his parents moved to California where they lived for a time on a large ranch in the hills above Oakland and San Leandro, now occupied by the Upper San Leandro Reservoir. Jay attended a one-room school near Canyon. The teacher boarded with the Dodsons and the children rode to school in a horse-drawn buggy, bringing the teacher with them. The farm life was ideal but hard work. The Dodsons lived at this location until the land was purchased for the reservoir. The family then moved to Oakland, where his father established a chiropractic office; Jay finished school there as a teen.

Although he was christened John William Dodson, Jr., he went by Jay to avoid confusion with John, Sr. He had two brothers and a sister, and is survived by one of the brothers. Jay and Carol Evelyn Crane were married on May 9, 1931. They had one daughter, Carol, born in 1935. Mrs. Dodson died in April 1992.

During World War I, Jay was a plate fitter, cutting templates for ships and was in charge of his sector. By profession, he was an accountant. In the late 1950s, while working for the optical firm, Bausch and Lomb, Jay received an honorary Ph.D. degree from Stanford University—one of the United State’s most prestigious universities—for developing an uncomplicated accounting file for speedy utilization by doctors, opticians and optical suppliers.

He became interested in succulent plants in 1940 and was captivated by the genus Haworthia from the beginning. Eventually he accumulated one of the most complete collections of these plants found anywhere. He corresponded and received plants from all the haworthia experts in Europe and South Africa. From 1946 through 1948, Jay published Haworthia Review; the official publication of the Succulent Liliaceae League of America. While it had a short existence, the Review served a useful purpose because it published much of the fragmented literature on haworthias. It was issued in mimeograph format with tipped-in black and white photographs. In 1998 Harry Mays published and edited all issues of the Haworthia Review into a smart new reprint, using modern computer technology. Obvious spelling and typing errors were corrected.

Jay wrote a few articles for the Cactus and Succulent Journal and published a 95-page spiral-bound booklet, An Introduction to the Study of Succulent Plants (ca. 1979). He also edited Katie Meadow’s 1976 book, Cacti and Other Succulents for Your Home.

Jay is best remembered for his leadership with four associates in founding the International Succulent Institute (I.S.I.). It was created explicitly for importing, propagating and distributing valuable new plant material—plants, seeds and cuttings—with source-data to fill scientific needs. Additionally, it provided for amateur horticulturists who preferred unique and beautiful new species not available commercially.

The I.S.I. was a non-profit organization and none of the officers received monetary compensation for the work of securing, propagating, packing and shipping plants. Lists of plants
for sale with full locality data were published in the *Cactus and Succulent Journal* once a year, with the I.S.I. paying for much of the cost. The first offering was published in vol. 30(5):156-158, 1958. Orders were sent to Jay, the I.S.I. secretary, who lived in Millbrae, California, at the time.

His work on succulents for I.S.I. continued until 1990 when the whole enterprise was transferred to the Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California, where it continues to serve the plant world as International Succulent Introductions.

In 1967 Jay retired from Bausch and Lomb and moved to Orinda where he was nearer the other I.S.I. associates. After retirement he accepted a curator's position for cacti and other succulents at the University of California Berkeley Botanical Gardens from 1967 through 1970.

He was named a CSSA Fellow 14 May 1973 while at Berkeley. The citation read, "Horticulturist dedicated to making rare and unusual plants available to collectors through the International Succulent Institute."

In 1983 Jay (at age 82), Lloyd Davis and Al Irving spent five weeks in South Africa doing plant exploration. When Jay decided to sell his collection, he wanted to keep it intact. He was pleased when in 1996 the Nong Nooch Tropical Garden in Thailand purchased it in its entirety.

Jay's name is commemorated in *Caralluma dodsoniana*, *Mammillaria dodsonii*, and *Ha-vorthia dodsoniana*.

Jay died on April 14, 1999, at age 98.

THE SEDUM SOCIETY AND ITS BULLETIN

Although sedums—generally modest, unspectacular plants—are not among the most popular of succulents, they do have their devotees, who have access to an excellent quarterly publication, the *Sedum Society Newsletter* (available at $22 a year through Sue Haffner, 3015 Timmy, Clovis, CA 93612). Published in England and edited by Ray Stephenson, author of that informative book, *Sedum—Cultivated Stonecrops*, the newsletter concentrates on the cold-hardier species, mainly those of Europe and Asia, but Mexican species are also covered. Such genera as *Villadia* and *Graptopetalum* are sometimes included. A plant-exchange program is available.

The 50th number of the newsletter appeared last July and may be considered typical. Among its articles are two on sedums native to Tunisia and Sicily, growing sedums in an English garden, and *S. mocinianum*, a new name for Mexican plants long grown as *S. hintonii*. Eight large color photos form a center section.

Among other recent significant articles is one on *S. booleanum*, with apparently opposite, four-ranked leaves (a rare character in Mexican species) and bright-red flowers. Unfortunately, this intriguing species was published in *Phytologia*, a periodical not seen by many succulent collectors—it is still not cultivated outside Mexico, where it grows wild on gypsum in Nuevo León.

ANOTHER CORRECTION

Larry Mitich wishes to correct a statement he made in his article on Graham Williamson in the September-October issue. The first sentence of the fifth paragraph of the right-hand column on page 268 should read: "Graham's collected material enabled Larry Leach to describe *Euphorbia fansbaweii* and *E. platyrhiza*.”

FROM THE EDITOR

(continued from page 3)

There will be one major succulent journal and it will be in English, the dominant language in a century. Individual countries will still produce smaller journals catering to their conditions and language. Despite the growing population, interest in succulents may not increase because of too many demands on time and attention as the world becomes more complex.

Some things will remain more or less the same, even in the year 2001: mealy bugs will still be a problem; probably labels will still fade; there will be no universally accepted potting mix; and the IOS will still have an active Cactus Consensus Committee working on a definitive generic system that will please everybody.

Have I been too pessimistic? I hope so.