

FILE NO. 190189

Petition

OF

Edith M. Hunter

For continued designation of the "Dahlia" as City Official Flower.

specify file

Aug. 14, 1946.

FILED

W. C. THOMAS
CITY COMPTROLLER AND EX-OFFICIO CITY CLERK

BY *W. C. Thomas*, DEPUTY

ACTION OF THE COUNCIL

REFERRED	TO	Harbor & Public Grounds
AUG 19 1946	TO	
REFERRED	REPORT ADOPTED	
REPORTED	REPORT ADOPTED	
REPORTED	REPORT ADOPTED	
REF. FOR ORD.	C. B. ORD.	
MAY 26 1947	DISPOSITION	ON FILE

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Mr. President:

Your Harbors & Public Grounds Committee

to which was referred the within Petition

would respectfully report that we have considered the same and respectfully recommend that

the same be placed on file.

CHAIRMAN

Panel

CHAIRMAN



EDITH M. HUNTER

CUT FLOWERS
ROOTS - SEEDS

TELEPHONE
SHERIDAN 8963
9029

FLORAL DECORATIONS
FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Lake Forest Park Dahlia Gardens

2929 E. 182ND ST. ANNEBORO, WASH.

SEATTLE, WASH.
55

To: City Council.

Aug. 1, 1946.

RECEIVED

AUG 3 1946

Mayor's Office

Honorable Mayor ~~William F. Devin~~:
Seattle, Wn.

Honorable Sir:

Since you officially opened our last Dahlia Show held in Sicks Stadium in 1942 I am appealing to you to back us in keeping the "Dahlia" as the official flower of Seattle. As I am also a member of the Chrysanthemum Society among whom I have many friends and wish to cause no hard feelings I also am a member of the Dahlia societies and with the help of Glen McLeod and Mr. Hulin and my husband since deceased, organized the Puget Sound Dahlia Society of Seattle. While the Chrysanthemum society introduced a new chrysanthemum last fall and named it "Seattle" they also think it should be the official flower of Seattle. The article in last night's "Times" reveals a fight and since it was necessary for our society to disband temporarily owing to the gasoline situation brought on by the war until better transportation facilities were available but we are still standing by. Many Dahlia Society members were not only from Seattle but all around and found it difficult to attend meetings and our members working at defense plants for long hours had to sacrifice their time and since the car situation is still critical and many without a car including myself with poor bus transportation we still have not felt the time right to resume meetings. We are still interested in dahlias and beautifying our Pacific Northwest and making it one of the leading beauty centers of our U. S.

Having followed flowers from coast to coast, attending the shows in the East, Middle West, California and the Pacific Northwest and being a commercial grower of dahlias as well as a grower of Chrysanthemums and doing special order work as a florist I would like to submit my opinion toward the choice of the Seattle Flower.

I have lived in Seattle for the past eighteen years and have watched the garden clubs grow as well as the growing of many beautiful flowers. We are thankful for the wonderful growing conditions for many flowers grouped together with our wonderful climate and scenery. I am amazed that our Chamber of Commerce, City Council and State have not been more concerned in making all flowers a bigger issue to tourists and pushing the beauty of the city of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest.

People have come to me and said why where are the beautiful gardens, parks and flowers we hear so much about that are supposed to be grown in this climate. In the East flowers are on the tables in all the hotels, hotel lobbies, stores and every

place of interest and the very largest of flower shows are sponsored and given free advertising and backed by city officials because this is an inducement to outsiders and tourists to make their city better and bigger and yet if we try to sponsor a flower show we have to beg for a little advertising or the little clubs have to stand the expense. Cups are given for all kinds of entries as well as nice prizes which makes flower shows more interesting and the public eager to visit but like every thing else it takes publicity and the backing of our city officials. Why Seattle is the best Flower center in the United States! To be sure many flowers are grown in many parts of our country but what part of the country grows a greater variety of rock plants, shrubs, bulbs, trees and flowers than our own Seattle and Puget Sound Area. Two years ago I had a State Forester visit my place and he was amazed at the many varieties of trees on a place as small as two acres. I had not thought of it but he started naming all the trees and different kinds and I really marvelled too. Maybe this little fight over one flower will make our officials really realize the hidden beauty and marvels of our own Seattle which would attract others. It takes the flowers and beauty of our land to cheer the hard and tired workers and give them a little relief from the business of the day, to cheer the sick or down hearted, to uplift those depressed and discouraged as well as beautify our city and prove the wonder working powers of a Divine Hand. Seattle should be the most beautiful City in the United States with all its possibilities.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, a little city, has been noted all over the world as having one of the most beautiful Public Gardens and when I compared it with the Boston public Garden in 1910 which was about the fifth largest city in U.S. at that time I personally thought it was small for Boston too was very beautiful and had some of the finest flower shows in Horticultural Hall I have ever seen. We too should have a Hall for such purposes other than Woodland Park. With the way Seattle has grown and the ideal climate for flower growing, why not have the most magnificent gardens here to attract people from all over the world since people are more travel minded these days and which they can enjoy along with the beautiful mountains, waterways and God given beauty places. A little more interest and publicity from our papers, Chamber of commerce, and City and State officials can make this possible. Garden clubs are doing their bit but garden clubs in other parts of the country are trying to make their section best too without the natural surroundings with which we are blest.

As for the specific flower for Seattle, it would cause a thorn in the side of any society to be turned down. The Rose Society would like to have the rose but since California is much more adapted to growing roses because of the adobe soil all conditions should be considered. To be sure we too have nice roses. Since the Dahlia Society worked hard and had many wonderful shows here I see no reason why the rights of having the "Dahlia" as the official flower of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest, a title it has already received, taken away. Dahlias are still grown here and are shipped all over the world especially to Alaska, Africa, England and Australia but shipping is a little difficult on account of the rigid horticultural rules. The Dahlia was originated on the desert sands of Mexico beginning with the Cactus type. They were brought to Madrid by Spanish botanists in 1789 and the

name given in honor of Dahl a Swedish botanist / Since a list of three thousand catalogued varieties at that time, they have developed to over 10,000 in our time. Most of these have been showing fancy kinds. The cactus or decorative types are more Chrysanthemum in form but they run in a variety of types from a very tiny one less than an inch known as "Teeny Weeny" including single, collarette, peony, cactus, formal, informal, anemone, duplex and grow in Pom Pom, Miniture, Show and Commercial as well as exhibition types. They have a varied use as show for backgrounds in churches, weddings and halls, the smaller types for table decorations, bridal bouquets and corsages a long period of beauty for yards or gardens so I know of no other flower that has the variety of colors, sizes. It has the longest season, abundance of flowers and color of any flower. As a commercial flower it is not only valued as having an abundance of flowers and their uses but its abundance of roots. It is one of the easiest flowers grown, requires only average care but with much longer season and more desirable results. It will do well in any soil from dry gravelly sand to rich loam or hard pan and the fan that wishes to test it and spend a little time to water, cultivate and fertilize it can achieve the finest and largest as well as the smallest of any flowers grown. A green dahlia has also been cultivated and the growers are still striving for that first blue dahlia. The dahlia is propagated by division of root cuttings and seed. Because of its wonderful possibilities the dahlia was introduced into England and worked with until the different colors and varieties were achieved and it was introduced from there all over the world. Since Eng and Seattle have similar climatic conditions and growers from all over U.S. find that stock grown here is superior to stock grown in other parts of our country I feel that the dahlia should still be the official flower of Seattle and Puget Sound Area.

Chrysanthemums like the Rhododendron, the rose, lillies and many others are beautiful, in fact exquisite flowers, and hold their place and the chrysanthemum as one of the latest has been chosen as the football favorite and widely used as such in the East and it would make our football games much more exciting when the ladies could wear a beautiful large mum in honor of their school and also makes for the last of the season shows creating much interest. I have not been able to grow Chrysanthemums near as successful and lose my plants near every year in spite of everything I do. They do require much more care than a dahlia and since they are a late flower and we have early rains they require a cover for protection. The early English varieties do very well since they bloom in Aug. Chrysanthemums are much more attracted to insects and the large mums do not compare in abundance to a plant as a dahlia since three flowers is an average with many show types only growing one. Every flower has its place and the Chrysanthemum should be considered in the fall planting of show places, in making flowers historic for Seattle also. The new variety is worthy of its name "Seattle" as is the dahlia "City Light" named after our Seattle City Light because of its attractive flame color with silver edge portraying a brilliant affect.

Garden Club members grow flowers on a small scale with one or two of many kinds since their lots are limited and give the flower of their individual preference the most care and adapt it to their own suitability while a commercial grower tests a flower for color, growing conditions, salability, beauty, for yard and

and home, decorative purposes, its uses, its disease resistance soil and climate, so taking all into consideration I still feel the Dahlia has the greater of all qualities for our city. Seattle has sponsored some of the finest dahlia shows in the country winning many achievement medals and the medal of honor from the American Dahlia Society of New York and is still backed by the Washington State Dahlia Society holding its annual show this year in American Legion Hall the last of August in Tacoma. Some of our finest horticultural displays have been dahlias at the County Fair at Puyallup at which it has been my pleasure to assist in judging as well as many other shows.

Hoping you will consider this in every way and that you will still see fit to continue the "Dahlia" as the official flower of Seattle.

Thanking you, I am

Sincerely yours,

Edith M. Hunter.