

Retail Through The Years

| Jennifer Zurko

>> Published Date: 4/25/2012

The First “Product Profiles” Installment ...?

Featured in the January 1940 issue, written by Vic Ball. Little did he know that these new “gadgets” would also help tie trash and produce bags in the future.

Those New Twist-Ems

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Don't misunderstand us: GROWER TALKS is not a free advertising medium for horticulture gadgetry, or anything else, but we do feel it our business to call your attention to anything of practical value. Tho [sic] we haven't tried them out in a large way, we do believe the new plant ties ingeniously labeled, "Twist Ems," are of just that merit.

Really, they are nothing but a piece of copper wire with a strip of heavy dark green paper asphalted to it on both sides. They impress us as an invaluable time saver in tying Mums to stakes, Roses, and especially pot plants where each shoot must be tied individually. You all know what a tedious job it is to string up a bed of standard Mums, making several separate knots for each spike. Once twisted on, they are quite permanent—until time comes for marketing the flower at which time they can be untwisted even faster than they were put on. Furthermore, their width prevents cutting into or breaking the stem as is sometimes the case with string. They are an attractive deep green color

so would not be objectionable in appearance on pot plants. Cost is quite within reason, about 5 to 6c [sic] per hundred depending on quantity. They come in 4 and 8 inch lengths.

Try them out and you'll be sold on them as a time (money) saver.

In the February 1945 issue, GrowerTalks and Ball Horticultural Company (known then as Geo J. Ball) founder George J. Ball writes in his monthly notes how the industry take consumers for granted. A theme that still reverberates today.

Our Home Gardeners

We feel safe in stating that most of our florist growers depend largely for business on the floricultural interest of amateur gardeners, and most of these gardeners are a keenly interested group. Increasing their enthusiasm for gardening is very obviously our business. All too frequently we fail to appreciate their enthusiasm and the possibilities in more freely cultivating their interest. Of prime importance is to play up what is new or novel, particularly what has been featured in print.

... Gardening should and can rightfully be played up as the most effective and profitable of all hobbies. It combines an ideal form of physical exercise with results that give pleasure as well as add attractiveness and value to one's surroundings. With none of us more than a few generations from the soil, it should be easy to awaken enthusiasm for this, the most worth while of all forms of recreation.

The following was from the February 1958 issue, during what many of you would consider the “salad days” of retail. This was due in part to the baby boom after WWII.

Market Picture of the Bedding Plant Business

By Robert Wright

Bedding plants are unequivocally in a solid sustained boom—an attribute not true of all the crops in our country's greenhouses today. No matter how you look at it, this crop has enjoyed substantially increased volume every year since the Second World War and promises to at least hold this rate of acceleration if not move ahead even faster.

... One trend is the increase in real disposable income. Another is the fabulous rate of home construction, which shows no signs of diminishing substantially for years to come. A third trend today is the rise in percentage of families who own homes. Still another

is the rapid and continuing rise in number of families and the tendency for these families to include more children (who need houses, not apartments to live in).

... Gardening is not traditional with many of today's homeowners. Often, they were brought up in rented city dwelling and only recently have had any opportunity to garden. Being so green, they are less likely to buy flower seed than to purchase plants nearly or actually in bloom. Since they have more to spend on gardening than folks used to ... they become new customers of yours. **GP**