

Re: "City of Gresham" lilac

**Subject:** Re: "City of Gresham" lilac

**From:** Brad Bittorf <ilsexecvp@gmail.com>

**Date:** 4/26/2015 7:11 PM

**To:** Michael Orelove <morelove2@comcast.net>, Brad Bittorf <ILSExecVP@gmail.com>

**CC:** Dwight Trahin <hklggardener@gmail.com>

Hello Michael.

You have a challenging question on your hands. The official registry entry for 'City of Gresham' is as follows:  
S VII 'City of Gresham', Klager 1915

*S. vulgaris*

syn. - 'Klager Dark Purple', 'Klager's Dark Purple'

Wister, Lilacs for America, 45 [1942], 27, 33 [1953]; ILS Newsletter 14(4):3-4 [1988]

cultivar name presumed registered 1953; name established and accepted.

This means it was indeed introduced by Hulda Klager in 1915. It has a single (not double) flower. The "VII" indicates it is classified as a Purple lilac. (The colors are White, Violet, Blue, Lilac, Pink, Magenta, and Purple.) You can see from the synonym name that it is called a dark purple.

I was able to locate a drawing of the form of flowers for 'City of Gresham' in the "Lilac Study" book of drawings by Joseph Dvorak, Jr. of the Morton Arboretum. The flag you hold seems to depict a more rounded bloom form; the drawing for 'City of Gresham' shows a number of separated flowering lobes that do not run together. Another source I saw only refers to 'City of Gresham' as one of the four best Klager lilacs, and indicated that it is "strongly scented." (It is the only of Klager's "City of..." series to have this distinction among the top four.

Oregon State University provides this photo which may allow you to judge for yourself:

[City of Gresham Lilac, Oregon State Univ., LANDSCAPE PLANTS](#)



### City of Gresham Lilac, Oregon State Univ., LANDSCAPE ...

*Syringa vulgaris* 'City of Gresham' Flower clusters [Main Page](#) [Previous Cv.](#) [Next Cv.](#)

[View on oregonstate.edu](#)

Preview by Yahoo

Another photo is shared on this web page:

[Hulda Klager's Legacy Blooms On — Southwest Washington ZEST](#)



### Hulda Klager's Legacy Blooms On — Southwest Washingt...

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[View on www.southwestwash...](#)

Preview by Yahoo

Of course the flag may have been an artist's rendition of the 'City of Gresham' (or another) lilac. There is a stained glass church window on Mackinac Island, Michigan, which everybody there says depicts a lilac, although those of us familiar with lilacs have to use some imagination to make the association.

I will try to ask my colleagues at the International Society Convention in May if they have any further information on this. I will also be in Spokane for their lilac festival May 16-17 so I will ask whether anybody may know there, too.

Brad Bittorf  
Executive Vice President  
International Lilac Society



