



## Lombard's Lilac Time (Images of America)

*Lombard Historical Society*

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Lombard has been called the "Lilac Village" since the late 1920s when William R. Plum, affectionately known as the "Colonel," bestowed his world-renowned lilac collection to the village for use as its first public park. Colonel Plum's 2.5-acre estate was known as Lilacia and began in 1911 after a trip to the Lemoine Lilac Gardens in France. By the time Plum passed away in 1927, he had amassed over 200 varieties of lilacs and had the largest collection of French hybrids in the world. Jens Jensen, the famous landscape architect, designed a public space out of Plum's lilac collection with winding paths of native limestone, tulips by the thousands, and a lily pond in the park. The first community-wide Lilac Festival was held in May of 1930, unveiling Jensen's Lilacia and including a Lilac Queen and Court, a pageant, parade, and wide variety of events and festivities celebrating the village's new park.

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