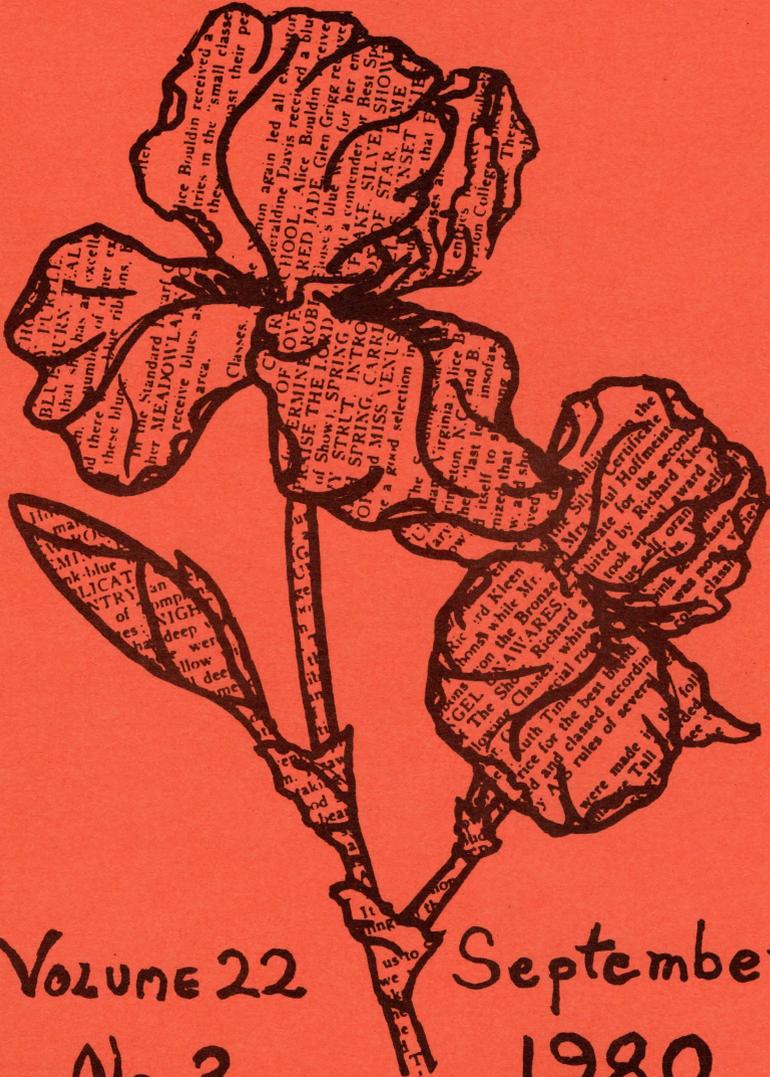


A.I.S. REGION 4 NEWSCAST



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AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY, REGION 4 BOARD
Maryland-Va. District of Columbia
NEWSCAST

Editor-in-Chief, Rena Crumpler

Associate Editor, Vacant

Mailing and Subscriptions, Kay Cooper
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REPORTERS

Blue Ridge Chapter..... Helen Rucker
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Francis Scott Key Chapter.. Mrs. Andrew C. Warner

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AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY, REGION 4, BOARD

Maryland-N. Carolina-Va.-West Va.-Dist. of Columbia

- Regional Vice President....Dr. E. Roy Epperson
1115 Delk Drive, High Point, N. C. 27262
Phone 919-883-9677
- Asst. R. V. P.Claire Barr
1910 Green Spring Valley Rd., Stevenson, Md. 21153
Phone 301-486-5214
- Immed. Past R. V. P.Mr. W. D. Kelley
653 Washington St. East, Lewisburg, W. Va. 24901
Phone 304-645-1570
- Secretary.....Celeste Cox
6324 Columbia Pike, Falls Church, Va. 22041
Phone 703-256-0939
- Treasurer.....Mr. Sam M. Owens, Jr.
160 Riverview Drive, St. Albans, W. Va. 25177
Phone 304-727-1729
- Parliamentarian.....Vacant
- Historian-Librarian.....Mrs. A. H. Price
Rt. 1, Box 51, Summerfield, N. C. 27358
- Editor-in-Chief-NEWSCAST...Rena M. Crumpler
2521 Wycliffe Ave., S. W., Roanoke, Va. 24014
Phone 703-344-2341
- Associate Editor-NEWSCAST..Vacant
- Budget Committee.....Dr. A. W. Rice
2817 Avenham Ave., Roanoke, Va. 24014
- Conventions.....R.V.P. (Acting)
- Judges' Training.....R.V.P. (Acting)
- Membership.....Helen Rucker
3205 Pineland Rd., S. W., Roanoke, Va. 24018
Phone 703-774-5682
- Auctions and Awards.....Dr. E. Roy Epperson
1115 Delk Drive, High Point, N. C. 27262
Phone 919-883-9677
- Median Irises.....Mrs. Paul Hoffmeister
Neavitt, Md. 21652
Phone 301-745-5279
- Reblooming Irises.....Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg
609 Downey St., Radford, Va. 24141
Phone 703-639-1333

Exhibitions.....Frances D. Brown
 11026 Steele Creek Rd., Charlotte, N. C. 28210
 Phone 704-588-1788

Robins.....Ruby D. Buchanan
 113 South Oak Dr., Winston-Salem, N. C. 27107

Photography.....Dr. D. C. Nearpass
 9526 - 50th Place, College Park, Md. 20740
 Phone 301-345-3324

Publicity and Public Relations..Rena M. Crumpler
 2521 Wycliffe Ave., S. W., Roanoke, Va. 24014
 Phone 703-344-2341

Blue Ridge Chapter Chairman.....Mildred Trent
 1915 Walmann Rd., S. W., Roanoke, Va. 24018
 Phone 703-774-9171

Marydel Chapter Chairman.....Willa M. Owens
 Box 214, Bozman, Md. 21612

Southern W. Va. Chapter Chairman.. Inactive

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 Rt. 1, Box 51, Summerfield, N. C. 27358

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 4901 Calamo St., Springfield, Va. 22150

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 16815 Falls Rd., Upperco, Md. 21155

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PRAYER

God, give me sympathy and sense
 And help me keep my courage high.
 God, give me calm and confidence -
 And, please - a twinkle in my eye.

Margaret Bailey

R.V.P.'s MESSAGE

This is the last message that I will have for you as RVP of Region 4. At the fall meeting in Easton, Maryland, Clair Barr will be elected as your RVP for the coming year. Four years ago in January, 1977 I became Acting RVP upon the untimely death of Anne Lee. You the membership have elected me for the succeeding three years. Now the time has come to look forward to and work with the new leadership for the Region.

I would be remiss without openly expressing my sincere appreciation to the many members of Region 4 who give so unstintingly of their time and efforts on behalf of iris activities. From among the many such persons, I would like to particularly commend Helen Rucker, who has given many hours to the task of Membership Chairman and continues to perform admirably in this position; Sam Owens, who has served the membership as Treasurer for many years and as he passes on the purse strings to Norman Clouser we can rest confident that our finances are in excellent condition; and of course, Rena Crumpler who again carried the burden (and it is that) of Editor of the NEWSCAST for the past years. Our incoming RVP, Claire Barr, had served the region in several capacities and has a good grasp of the activities of the region and of the national organization. She has represented Region 4 at the spring meeting of the National Board of AIS and her work with the River Farm project at Mount Vernon draws attention and praise to Region 4. She will need the support of each of us in the coming year. If you are asked to accept some task or position within the region please give serious consideration to the request and then say YES!

One of my goals as RVP was to strengthen the Judges' Training program in the region and interest

more members in becoming accredited judges. Region 4 had 35 accredited judges in 1977 and 45 in 1980. I have appointed 16 apprentice judges. We have lost judges to resignation, nonpayment of dues, failure to vote timely ballots and death. The increase in number of accredited judges is a step toward my goal. However, I am disappointed each time a judge is lost from the roster since appointment as a judge is a privilege and requires a service to the American Iris Society.

A second goal was that of increasing the membership in Region 4. In mid-August of this year the membership in AIS exceeded 6300! On June 1, 1977, there were 274 members of Region 4; on June 1, 1980, there were 299 members. This is a 10% increase in membership. That number would be higher except that many persons join on an annual basis and then do not renew at the end of that year. I do not have any statistics on these, although I am confident that over the three year period approximately 50 members did not renew! The secret to membership growth lies in retention as well as recruitment. I do not have the answer to retention but feel strongly that it lies within the local chapter activities and depends largely upon personal communication. Ruby Bechanan of Winston-Salem, NC and Nancy Karriker of Kannapolis, NC, have both been responsible for several new members this past two years. They have no secret methods - each of them is simply a great go-getter! So, maybe a secret of membership is GO GET 'EM!!

The North Carolina Iris Society, J. D. Stadler President, is now an Affiliate of the American Iris Society. This society joins the Francis Scott Key Iris Society as the two current Affiliates in Region 4.

My last official duty as RVP will be to conduct the election of officers at the Fall meeting in Easton, Md. I will then turn the gavel over to Claire and once again become just an ordinary interested and working member of Region 4. Part of that work will be to participate in the beardless iris auction to be held that night. The proceeds will be for the benefit of the activities of the region. I hope to see you there bidding for the spuria, louisiana and siberian iris offered for sale. Among the siberians will be: BEE, DARK CIRCLE, SILVER EDGE, RUFFLED VELVET and ATOLL.

I appreciate this opportunity to have served you as RVP. I look forward to working with Claire and the other officers as my interest in AIS can be of use to the membership.

Roy

HOW TO BECOME AN IRIS NUT

It's easy. All you have to do is buy a bag of marbles at the same time you buy your first iris.

Each time you buy a new iris and plant it, take a marble out of the bag and throw it away.

When you've lost all your marbles, you automatically become an iris nut.

EDITOR'S PAGE

This has not been my summer. Heat, drought, a destructive storm and, finally, as I was packing for the Daylily Convention, an attack of acute bursitis in my hip. Just lucky that it didn't strike after I was on my way.

Early, a trip to Oklahoma for the Iris Convention was a pleasure. Although we found a late season, it rained inches on the tours and there was little except SDBs and IBs to be seen, the hosts were a great deal more upset than the guests, most of whom were interested to see the smaller irises at their very best. There were several beautiful plantings.

The O K folks had planned one of the nicest conventions I've ever attended. For once, there was time to really visit with friends. Hospitality O K style leaves nothing to be desired.

From Roanoke, we went straight to Oklahoma City where we visited the gardens of Perry Dyer and Paul Black. There are a lot of hybridizers in that area who work on the IBs and SDBs and Perry and Paul have large collections as well as their own creations. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting with them both.

In Tulsa, a few of the IBs came out for us toward the end of the week. Bryce Williamson's SUNRISE SUNSET, a very early apricot-orange, was blooming in huge clumps in many of the gardens and it certainly put on a show. One dark iris, a new one, TWIST OF FATE by Cleo Palmer, was particularly interesting with black velvet falls, amber shoulders and a bronze-tipped violet beard. The standards shaded from light blue to darker blue-violet. It had a great deal of personality and real distinction both in coloring and form. It was sold out early and I didn't get it but will certainly order it

early next year.

My own season was good but strange with irises blooming way off schedule. In fact, there was some freeze damage to the early varieties but most of them finally came through and bloomed with the mid-season ones. The late irises bloomed early so there wasn't a long season. The Siberians bloomed with the TBs except for the lovely whites, WING ON WING and EARTHSHINE which I have never been able to coax into blooming earlier. Am going to experiment with these two and see if unusual protection with sun and reflected sun, extra feeding with lots of water will do the trick.

Increased my Siberian planting last year and this year and will increase again in 1981. My garden has been designated as a Siberian Display Garden so I hope to bring most of them to bloom with the TBs in order that more visitors will be exposed to them.

I'm looking forward to seeing a lot of you at the Maryland meeting.

Rena

A YOUTH MEMBER GROWS UP

NEWSCAST's best wishes for happiness go to Mrs. David P. Cooley (the former Dorothy Beasley) who has been a Youth Member since she was a little girl. Region 4 members will remember her as Mrs. Figge's granddaughter. Dorothy now has a brand new adult Life Membership in A.I.S. Ed.

FALL MEETING REGION 4 AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

OCT. 10-11, 1980 TIDEWATER INN - EASTON, MARYLAND

To all members of Region 4, with a special welcome to new members:

Once again it is time to think of Region 4's Fall Meeting, a Board Meeting open to all, especially important this year as there was no meeting in the spring. Marydel Chapter has invited us to the beautiful Eastern Shore of Maryland, and is taking care of all the arrangements.

The Judges' Training will be interesting and beneficial whether taken for credit or not. The class will be conducted by Doris Simpson of Francis Scott Key, who grows beautiful Louisianas very successfully in a very small garden. We all could learn a lot about Louisianas, which are all too often neglected in this section of the country.

RVP Epperson will have charge of the auction on Saturday night. Roy was authorized by the Board to make a purchase for the auction, and donations of Siberians or Louisianas from your gardens will be gratefully accepted to supplement the purchase. It will be a little late for TB planting, but if you have extras, bring them and perhaps they could be sold too.

PLAN NOW TO COME -----

Make reservations directly with the "TIDEWATER INN", Easton, MD 21601. Phone 301 822 1300, or letter, attention Mr. Anton Hoevenaars, and tell them you are for the Iris Society meeting. Rates are:

Single, per night - - - \$28.00

Double, per night - - - 34.00

Two night weekend special, old rates promised to us for this meeting, so remind them - - \$81.38 for

two, paid with reservation includes Friday evening dinner and Sunday brunch. Both are fine buffets. This is a big saving.

There are other accommodations along our main highway, Rt. 50, including Holiday Inn, 301 822 4600, and Econo Travel, 301 822 6330.

In any case, make reservations early, as October starts the season for hunters and would-be hunters to crowd this area.

Meeting pre-registration fee, covering museum (see Saturday morning program) tickets and our cost to mail 250 of these notices is \$4.50 per person sent as soon as possible to Mrs. Paul Hoffmeister, Box 462, Neavitt, MD 21652. We must know as soon as possible how many to prepare for!

Meals, except those covered by the special, are at your own expense, although we expect most members will eat together in a quiet private room off the hotel main dining room, where we will also hold our meetings.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE ----

Friday, 6:30 P. M. Dinner (the hotel has an excellent buffet on Fridays at \$9.50)

8:00 P. M. Get together with slides from Tulsa

Saturday 9:30 A.M. Meet in hotel lobby to form car pools to Chesapeake Day Maritime Museum at St. Michaels (10 miles) and lunch at the adjacent "Crab Claw", a local "must"

1:30 P. M. Judges' Training Program on Louisianas

4:00 P. M. Open Executive Board Meeting and election of officers

6:30 P. M. Dinner

8:00 P. M. Auction of beardless irises

ENVOI - - -

This is an informal meeting, with meals Dutch treat except as noted above. It is a time for fellowship, fun, and information in a lovely setting.

October 10-11 should be a good time for rebloomers, so bring some stalks from your gardens if possible. For the past two years we have seen beautiful ones in Radford at the Zurbrigg gardens, and we hope that Lloyd and Nita will be able to bring some with them this time.

Remember, make reservations with the hotel early, and send registrations for our meetings to Mrs. Paul Hoffmeister as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you for a great weekend!

Claire Barr,

Assistant RVP

Note: This notice will come to most of you by mail. It is printed in NEWSCAST for the record and also for the benefit of new members whose names may come to NEWSCAST after the notice has been sent out. Ed.

IRIS IN VIRGINIA

Celeste Cox

We had another lovely iris year in Fairfax County, Virginia. Had plenty of, if not too much, rain during the early spring. One of our long replanted beds seemed to have the water settle in the center of it where VIOLET HARMONY, along with others were planted. This kept her from having her

usual splendiferous spring fling and the rhizomes had to be replaced and that part of the bed done over.

Believe we had fewer iris this year with three or four blooms opening at the same time but those that did astonished me. We expect Dr. Near-pass' LORD BALTIMORE to have plenty of buds and many open blooms at one time. Most astonishing of all was that most of the stalks of CUP RACE had three or four blooms at a time. LILAC TREAT had several open flowers at the same time and having been planted in front of CUP RACE it had a perfect background of white which added sparkle to its coloring.

WEDDING VOW had no low blooms and made a lovely show in her place next to SHIPSHAPE, which also did very well.

Mr. Crossman's LOUDOUN LASSIE, LOUDOUN CHARMER, LOUDOUN BEAUTY and his new LOUDOUN GOLD did very well. In fact people liked LOUDOUN GOLD so well they stole more stalks from it than from any of the other plants. We also have a lovely painting of this one done by one of the artists who visit the garden.

CARAMBA, BICENTENNIAL, FIVE STAR ADMIRAL, DREAM LOVER, ICE SCULPTURE, BLUE LUSTRE, SMOKED PEARL, NIGHT OWL and all the red ones did extremely well this year.

WINTER OLYMPICS must have liked the weather. It was as vigorous as it had ever been for us and produced plenty of bloom.

We were happy to note that the majority of the iris did quite well including SHOWCASE which has become another of our favorites.

Mr. Burger's DEEP PACIFIC produced 13 buds in Mr. Crossman's garden. We were there when he counted them. It has other qualities such as good color, substance, branching and vigor and is a must on our list for this year.

Now to get down to the business of how to grow and produce good iris. This information should prove beneficial to all new iris growers and especially (I hope) to all you garden club members who have been gifted with iris from the Cox garden.

You may plant in June or July. This is also the time to reset clumps that are crowded.

Place rhizomes just below the surface of the ground with the roots well spread out. Firm soil when planting and water well.

Iris can be planted 14 inches to 2 feet apart. Plant 8 inches apart in groups of three or more of one variety if you wish a clump effect. (We do this.) You will have to divide more often but you will have a splash of color sooner.

When preparing a new bed spade in a lot of compost below the roots. Using a well balanced fertilizer applied as a top dressing and dusted around and between the plants in early spring is desirable. We use 5-10-5. Something low in nitrogen is important.

Cultivate shallowly. Feeder roots are very near the surface. Keep beds free of weeds and do not let neighboring plants encroach upon the iris. They must have sunshine on the rhizome. Remove outer leaves as they begin to brown. Clean cultivation is a must.

Some people use Treflan which is a pre-emergent weed killer on the iris beds. It prevents weeds but will not kill those that have already germinated.

When the leaves are about 6 inches tall in the spring (about first of April) spray with Cygon (insecticide). Do this twice again in 2 week intervals (3 times in all). Captan or Phaltan (fungicides) may be added to the Cygon spray and used at the same time to control leaf spot and other fungus. If you prefer you may use Sevin and dust it on and around the plants using the same schedule you would use for Cygon. You would still need to spray with Captan or Phaltan in addition.

If you feel you need more information you are free to visit our garden at bloom time and discuss and exchange information.

We have again donated iris from our garden to the Park Service for use in the White House Garden. They will be grown in tubs and moved into the gardens at bloom time and then removed. They came to select them at bloom time this year. Their request came too late year before last as we had replanted practically all of our iris and did not have too many to spare. We, therefore, ordered some from Cottage Gardens for them. It was a bit late for Cottage Gardens also but they were most generous.

These iris were grown in the government greenhouse in order to increase the number of each. It will be nice to have iris in the White House gardens for the public and visitors to see. Perhaps they can have a really good show of them next spring.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT - REGION 4, A.I.S.
AUGUST, 1980

MARYLAND -

F.S.K.

New Members -

Mrs. Gary Black, 18535 Foreston Rd.
Parkton, Md., 21120

Mrs. W. G. Speicher, 135 E. Main St.,
Westminster, Md. 21157

Mrs. David P. Cooley, Box 4,
Clements, Md. 20624 (formerly Dorothy Beasley)

Delete -

Hardy Garden Club Membership
Dorothy Y. Beasley, Leonardstown, Md.

Address Change -

Mr. & Mrs. Wm. S. Barr to
1910 Green Spring Valley Rd., Stevenson Md.
21153

MARYDEL -

New Member -

Miss Hannah Port
Rich Neck Farm, Earlsville, Md. 21919 (YOUTH)

Changes

Mr. Richard Kleen, Pandion, St. Michaels, Md.

Mrs. F. I. Tinker, 201 Green St., St. Michaels,
Md.

Delete -

Ms. Kathryn B. Corbin, Royal Oak, Md.

C. & P. -

New Members -

Mr. Clarence E. Mahan
7311 Churchill Rd., McLean, Va. 22101

Miss Kelly Norris
5565 Holmes Run Parkway, Alexandria, Va.
22304 (YOUTH)

Changes -

Dr. William Ackerman
Ashton, Md. (instead of Mr.)

Mr. Eugene S. Burger
Frederick, Md. (single membership).

Mrs. Geneva S. Dupont
Box #550, Hollywood, Md.

Mrs. Mary G. Miller
2696 Masque Farm Rd., Annapolis, Md.

Mrs. Hallie P. Mosely
12329 McCrossin Lane, Potomac, Md.

Mr. Merrick E. Shawe
New Carrollton, Md.

Mrs. Clare H. Spence
Strasburg, Va.

Delete -

Mr. Rick Calvert
3407 Jermantown Rd., Fairfax, Va. 22030

NORTH CAROLINA -

E.N.C.

New Members -

Mr. Richard G. Elder
7313 Grist Mill Rd., Raleigh, N. C. 27609

Captain Stan Gray, F.A.O.
Course 78-F3, U.S.A.I.M.A., Ft. Bragg, N.C. 28307

Wallace & Isabelle Hardwick
616 Texas Ave., Burlington, N. C. 27215

Ms. Margaret M. Pearson
Rt. 2, Box 303-A, Franklinton, N. C. 27525

Mrs. Linnie L. Vickery
218 Sheraton Park Rd., Greensboro, N. C. 27406

Jill Wilson
6611 Riverwood Rd., Walkertown, N. C. 27051

Changes -

Mr. & Mrs. R. D. Godwin
Goldsboro, N. C. (add Mr.)

Mr. E. M. Pendergraph (not Pendergraff)
Durham, N. C.

W.N.C. -

New Members -

Mrs. Audrey Cline
Rt. 1, Box 180, Concord, N. C. 28025

Mrs. David Cline
Rt. 1, Box 180A, Concord, N. C. 28025

Mr. & Mrs. Foster Davidson
Rt. 4, Box 369, Candler, N. C. 28715

Mrs. E. V. Garraux & Carl T. Hampton
Rt. 2, Box 300, Asheville, N. C. 28805

Mrs. Vickie Hardin
Rt. 3, Box 175, Mooresville, N. C. 28115

Mrs. Lorene C. Hartline
406 Maupin Ave., Salisbury, N. C. 28144

Ms. Ruth B. Holbrook
7047 Cheyenne Dr., Charlotte, N. C. 28213

Mr. Bert Livingston
Rt. 1, Box 416, Swannania, N. C. 28778

Mr. Gene Ray Magruder
P. O. Box 375, East Flat Rock, N. C. 28726

Joann B. Mercer
1515 Ridgewood Dr., Gastonia, N. C. 28052

Mr. George H. Mauney
315 N. Garrison Dr., Kings Mt., N. C. 28086

Mrs. Audrey Miller
Rt. 3, Box 53-B, Kannapolis, N. C. 28081

Mrs. Farris L. Miller
Rt. 3, Box 53-B, Kannapolis, N. C. 28081

Miss Michelle Nelson
109 South Carolina Ave., Hendersonville, N.C.
(YOUTH) 28739

Isabelle J. Nix
Rt. 1, Box 123, Hendersonville, N. C. 28739

Mrs. Carlo Renzulli
Box 1223, Brevard, N. C. 28712

Mrs. Anne K. Wilde
69 Keasley Rd., Asheville, N. C. 28805

Changes -

Mrs. Paul Lee Karriker
Box 490, Mooresville, N. C.

Delete -

Mrs. Carl R. Ellis
227 Northfield Ct., Hendersonville, N.C.

Mrs. S. O. Martin
Rt. 1, Jonesville, N. C. 28642

VIRGINIA -

BLUE RIDGE -

New Members-

Mrs. Tommie Colley
1423 Foxbrook Lane, Charlottesville, Va. 22901
Lois D. Disney
1415 Palmer Dr., Blacksburg, Va. 26060

Changes -

Mr. & Mrs. T. E. King
Moneta, Va. (list Mrs. King).
Mrs. John W. McCoy to Mrs. Clytie B. McCoy

NORFOLK-

New Member -

Mr. Allen H. Jefferies
312 DePaul Medical Bldg., Norfolk, Va. 23504

WEST VIRGINIA -

New Member -

Mrs. Ira M. Baker
Rt. 4, Box 373-A, Morgantown, W. Va. 26505

Change -

Mr. William R. Kuykendahl
Rt. 2, Box 232, Keyser, W. Va. 26726

Delete -

Mr. Gene Looney
P. O. Box 687, Elkins, W. Va. 26241
Mrs. Elizabeth Lovejoy & Mrs. Lona Windsor
1245½ Pike St., Milton, W. Va. 25541
Mrs. Albert Woodworth
Box 323, Hurricane, W. Va. 25526

Helen Rucker,
Membership Chairman
Region 4, A.I.S.

NEWS OF THE CHAPTERS

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

Francis Scott Key had a lovely exhibition on Saturday, May 24th. We had a total of 164 horticulture exhibits and 16 artistic exhibits. Mr. and Mrs. William Barr won the Queen of the Show with an outstanding stalk of "VANITY" with four open flowers. They also won the Sweepstakes by winning 10 blue ribbons. Carol Warner placed second with 9 blues and Mr. and Mrs. J. Owings Rebert were third with 8 blue ribbons. We estimate that about 350 people came through to look at the show. Watson's Garden Center was so impressed that they asked us to leave a large quantity of the horticulture exhibits on display through Sunday.

Our sale on June 28th was also very successful. We were able to sell close to 1700 rhizomes and make a profit of approximately \$975.00. Several members gave a great deal of time to make this sale a huge success.

Our fall meeting will be on Sunday, October 26th at Alice Miller's home in Towson.

Sincerely,

Carol Warner, Pres.

MARYDEL

The Marydel Officers for our next year, starting this August are:

Chapter Chairman
Mrs. Willa M. Owens
Box 214, Bozman, MD 21612

Chapter Vice-Chairman
Mr. Paul L. Hoffmeister
Box 462, Neavitt, MD 21652

Secretary
Mrs. Anne T. Whiting
Rt. 1, Box 228, Greensboro, MD 21639

Treasurer
Mrs. Margaret L. Dabson
P. O. Box 45, Greensboro, MD 21639

Our annual sale and auction is July 26, so we are digging and all the rest, trying to dodge the sun, and not too successfully. The very worst thing about iris is the hot planting time!

Our letter on the fall meeting will be out soon. See you in Easton!

For cooler summers,

Paul Hoffmeister

WESTERN N. C.

Following is a list of the new officers for Western North Carolina Chapter, A.I.S. as of June 28th, 1980:

Chairman
Mr. H. S. Cowell, Jr.
4322 Columbine Circle
Charlotte, N. C. 28211

Secretary-Treasurer
Mrs. W. C. (Flossie) Nelson
109 South Carolina Avenue
Hendersonville, N. C. 28739

The temperatures have been lousy this summer for the mountains (up to 106°), just now getting a breather with a few scattered showers.

Sincerely,

Flossie Nelson,
Secretary-Treasurer

THE ROBINS' CORNER
113 Southoak Drive
Winston-Salem, N.C.
Ruby Buchanan, Chairman

We have just launched the Region 4 Species Iris Robin - which is the third Robin to fly in the past ten months. The first one, Region 4 General Interests Iris Robin - (affectionately called "The Ramblin' Robin" by the participants) now has eleven "Birds" and is near the end of the fifth flight. What a lot of interests are being covered! I really must find time to glean those letters for NEWSCAST - or find a Robin Reporter. The days are simply not long enough for the many interesting things needing to be done.

The Royal Four Remontant Iris Robin has been in flight since January and has nine enthusiastic "two-timers" participating. I hope Rosalie will glean it for the Recorder. There is material there that really must be made available to other Remontant fanciers. While the newest Robin has three SIGMA members among the flock - and we are sure there will be many tips on growing iris species given in the Robin letters. We are inviting those who grow any or all of the beardless irises to join us in this Robin.

I can't help wondering where our hybridizing

friends are? I remember a former Region 4 Hybridizing Robin which boasted the name "THE PRIDE OF REGION 4. Somehow, I had expected to hear from some of those spreaders of pollen long before now. Of course, we have some hybridizers flying with the other Robins - Lloyd Zurbrigg is noted for his work with remontant iris - and Louise C. Smith is working for fragrance. In fact, most of our iris growers find themselves acting as pollen daubers, I am sure.

We really must find an enthusiastic young worker to gather our Youth members into a Robin of their own. Youths enjoy telling others about the things they do for fun. With hundreds of AIS members in our Region - why aren't we more thoughtful about getting our young people interested in promoting our favorite flower - the IRIS? Give them a row (or a garden) of iris all their own and sponsor an AIS membership for them, too. Encourage them to learn the art of making new irises by spreading a bit of pollen.

As Roy said in the letter appointing me the task of reorganizing the Robin program, "The possibilities are endless." Still, it is a tremendous job for one old woman. I certainly invite one and all to invite their friends to join in the fun with a Robin. Tell us how YOU grow your iris and let us share your problems too. Troubles are halved and joys are doubled by sharing them. For instance, have you ever tried the herbicide KLEENUP? Was it effective or did you find out (as I did) that it doesn't "do the job"? The quart used to spray perennial weeds (according to directions on the container) did not even make them sick - killed one pokeberry plant - that is learning the hard way.

The salesman at the garden center assured us that it was "Roundup chemicals under another name.

The only difference is that Kleenup is less expensive." Live and learn! Tell us the kind of Robin you could enjoy flying with. I received a letter not long ago asking a simple question - not so easily answered. "Do you have a good Robin in flight which sticks to brass tacks?" Huh oh! Brass tacks in an iris Robin? Reading further I find the writer wants tips about iris culture, new iris, overlooked iris, etc. "I could enjoy taking part in such a Robin - or one on "Crafts" - Regional or in our general area." That puts the matter squarely up to the participating Robin members. Have you found new methods to improve the growth of your iris? Let us know about it. Do you feel that certain iris grown in our area deserve more recognition for excellence and beauty? Or did you perhaps find a new variety growing in a garden visited which is outstanding? Don't forget to tell us about it - that's the name of the game.

Do you live in an area with few iris growers? Give your neighbor a rhizome and introduce her to beauty - that's the way to win iris friends - but don't be "a lone wolf" get in touch with your Robins Chairman and join a circle of letters from others who love iris already. Postage is much cheaper than gasoline - you can "visit" anywhere in the Region for 15¢ - and the fattest Robin costs less than 50¢ per flight. Imagine having eleven iris letters dropping into your mail box - which can be answered with a single newsy letter. Come on, Regionaires, let's get together and double our joys.

I'm flying with five Robins and enjoying every flight and every letter. One of my ambitions is to have more letters than I can answer. Let me hear from YOU.

Ruby

GOOD THOUGHTS FROM OUR FRIENDS of other REGIONS
with thanks to the publications indicated.

ROUNDUP YOUR WEEDS AND GRASSES
Ronald Mullin

In 1976 I began the giant task of preparing beds for the 1980 Convention at the home of Doris and Frank Maltsberger. The area has never grown irises, is protected on three sides by trees, and is big enough for many people to view flowers without running over each other.

The plans called for seven different areas for planting. It probably will end up being eight or nine. The beds were not to be simple rectangles, but included all sorts of shapes, some to fit the contour of the trees. Doris and I spent plenty of time marking, walking, and looking as we tried to get those beds just right. It may sound easy to make a circular bed, or an oval, or one that is a semicircle around a tree, but it isn't. We used knives, strings, stakes, hoses, scissors, a hoe, and baby powder in our efforts. Doris said the powder could be grandson Josh's contribution to the convention.

Finally the beds were marked and the digging was started. The ground was hard and covered with solid Bermuda. A bed about six feet wide and 150-160 feet long, circle 16 feet in diameter, and the oval 16 feet by 48 feet were dug by hand. Time consuming is hardly adequate to describe this task. I don't know if the sight of someone working is unusual in Pawnee or not, but every car on the busy street almost ran off the road as the occupants stared!

Realizing that this pace would not allow com-

pletion before 1980, I then turned to Roundup. This is a relatively new herbicide that has been used by all the gardeners for 1980, as each is using virgin soil for the plantings, and that meant getting rid of grass. Charlene Johnson, her nephew John, and I sprayed large areas of my garden and hers. Charlene and I followed the directions to the letter regarding clothing, etc. This gave passing motorists another chance to stare. Here were two teachers, one the wife of the State Representative, running around looking like scarecrows. Charlene had a huge piece of cardboard which we used for shielding other plants. Occasionally a wind gust would almost make airborne, but I'm happy to report that she kept her footing. Sometimes she had to get inside the cedar trees to protect its branches, but it is surviving today as a result of her efforts.

Finally the spraying was finished. By the next morning the grass had an oily, dark look. It stayed this way a couple of days and then began dying back. Soon the entire area was yellow. We sprayed areas again where any green remained, and in all the spots we sprayed no Bermuda has returned.

After the grass died it was a simple matter to till the soil, and the beds were ready. Roundup kills only growing plants and does not kill the soil or seeds in it. It certainly beats digging by hand!

Some Johnson grass got a start in Dorothy Howard's garden, and was about to invade my Marlow garden from the roadside. I sprayed both places with Roundup and achieved remarkable success. At Marlow all the grass died immediately. In Dorothy's garden the grass just kept hanging on although it did look sick. One day I gave a tall stalk a tug and it came up easily. The other grass did too,

because the root system had been destroyed - end of Johnson grass.

Nut grass can survive a spraying because it comes back from the nut. I suspect that continued spraying would kill it too. I may give that a try.

Roundup is a liquid and is mixed with water and sprayed. Virginia Mathews lists the "dosage" at 4 tablespoons per gallon for annuals and 6 for perennials. I don't believe I used quite that much. This mixture is sprayed to cover, but not runoff, the plants. The area should be left untilled for at least seven days. We found that the warmer the temperature, the quicker and more complete the kill. If it should rain, the Roundup will still work if it has been on long enough to have penetrated the plant surface.

When tilling it is all right to leave the old plants in the soil. If they were killed they will not be back, and the Roundup sprayed on them does not remain to harm other plants.

The primary drawback to Roundup is its cost. It comes in gallon size only, and ranges in price from \$56 to \$70. Our group bought gallons and divided them. I feel it is worth the cost because it does such a good job. Just remember to follow the directions carefully, as you should with all chemicals.

When you come to the convention in 1980, every garden (including Philbrook) will have been sprayed with Roundup. Maybe we should call it the 1980 Roundup instead of the 1980 Convention.

As a farm boy who hoed peanuts and cotton every summer it was a real thrill for me FINALLY to win out over Johnson grass and Bermuda grass. "Roundup" your weeds and grass this summer. The dividends are great.

(Reprinted from Region 22 News, Spring 1979)

SIBERIAN IRISES

By

Dr. Currier McEwen

AIS Bulletin Representative
Society for Siberian Irises

From Region 3 NEWSLETTER, summer, 1980.

There are two distinct groups of Siberian irises, those with 28 chromosomes which are the ones usually seen in gardens, and a second group with 40 chromosomes. The latter are delightful, but are more difficult to grow. The experienced grower of Siberians may care to try some, but they probably are not for the beginner. Hence, this article is limited to a consideration only of the 28 chromosome group and the tetraploids derived from them.

CULTURE

Soil and Fertilizer

They prefer a slightly acid soil, but are not fussy and will grow over a wide range of pH from below 5 to more than 7. Where the natural pH is on the alkaline side, it is helpful to dig in plenty of acid type peat moss and to use acid type fertilizer. A light application of fertilizer in the spring is useful, but in good soil Siberians will bloom year after year with none.

Planting

The small rhizomes are planted about one or two inches below the surface. I like to dig a hole for them, and then make a mound in the center. The rhizomes are then placed on the mound with their roots spread down around it, and the soil is

then filled back in. This insures that there will be no air pocket under the rhizomes. The plant is then copiously watered. It is wise to space them $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 feet apart. They will then need dividing and replanting only every four or five years when they have become too crowded.

The single most important requirement is that Siberians must not be allowed to become dry in their first year. If roots are dry on arrival of new plants, soak them overnight in water, and after planting, all should be watered during dry periods. Because raised beds are prone to drying, they are not good spots for Siberians. I must emphasize, however, that after they have become established, Siberians tolerate dry weather as well as any perennials.

In areas with hot summers and relatively mild winters planting is done in September, but in very cold sections with mild summers, spring planting is very satisfactory. The bed chosen for them should receive the equivalent of at least half a day of sun, and full sun is better except in very hot places.

Diseases and Pests

One of the endearing features of Siberian irises is their freedom from diseases. In our planting of some four to five thousand Siberians in Maine, I have never had to use a spray to prevent or treat a disease such as rot or other ills common to the Tall Bearded iris. Siberians are, however, subject to attack by the iris borer. Where borers are a problem they are readily controlled with a spray of Cygon 2E, two to four teaspoonfuls per gallon of water, when spring growth is 4 to 6 inches high. If infestation is severe, a second spraying can be done about 10 days later.

Season of Bloom

The earliest Siberians bloom with the early Tall Bearded irises, but peak bloom is a few days after that of the TBs. The average duration of bloom is about three weeks, but there is now beginning to be an increasing number of continuous bloomers and rebloomers with total bloom periods of six weeks or more. Rebloom in most Siberians differs from that of most TBs in that the rest period is only a week or two.

FEATURES OF MODERN SIBERIANS

Size and Height

Most Siberian flowers are from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 inches in diameter on stalks 20 to 36 inches tall, but there are miniatures with 3-inch flowers on 8 to 12-inch stalks, and tetraploid flowers often measure 6 inches in diameter on stalks of usual height.

Form

The traditional Siberian form is that of the arched vertical or semi-flaring type, but since the advent of WHITE SWIRL, many flowers of round, flaring form have been introduced. Both types, in the judgment of the Society for Siberian Irises, are equally desirable. The beginner is urged to select some of each type.

Color

The predominant color is blue-violet in all shades from light to midnight blue. White ones are numerous also from pure white to cream, some absolute selfs, and others with yellow at the base of the falls. Wine reds have long been available, as have also lavender pinks; and pro-

gress is being made toward true red and pink. Flowers of reddish purple also are numerous, and there are some which are close to black. Only recently have yellow amoenas appeared in Siberians of the 28 chromosome group. Only one which does not fade has been introduced, but there soon will be more.

Fragrance

This remains a challenge to the hybridizers for there are as yet none with fragrance.

THE GHOST OF AN IRIS LOVER LAMENTS

(Reprinted courtesy Sooner State Iris News)
Bob Benton

I went to an iris show the other day. There were a lot of iris on display. I saw several that at the time I thought I couldn't live without. There were a lot of people there to look at the iris and more coming in.

I had brought a rather nice iris with me to the show. It had a candelabra stalk with three huge well formed waxen yellow blossoms. If I could have entered it in the show with a name (somehow I lost the tag - neighbor's dog I think), it surely would have been "Queen of the Show".

Since the crowd was large and more people were coming in, I didn't think I would be too conspicuous carrying the stalk of iris up and down the rows of displayed iris. Surely someone else had this big yellow thing in their garden and knew its name.

After an exhaustive search during which many people queried me as to the identity of the iris

I was carrying (one lady wanted to buy a rhizome of it from me right there in the middle of the show), I finally got to the end of the displays.

It wasn't there. I still didn't know its name. I was totally exhausted and collapsed right there on the spot.

I'm pretty sure the show chairman was notified of my demise and the awards committee thought it would be nice to pin an honorable mention ribbon on my lapel. Hospitality wondered if I had signed the guest book and placement didn't know where to put me. I wasn't on the show schedule.

There I lay flat on my back still clutching my unnamed, three-blossom potential award winning beauty as the crowds filed by me.

Did anyone say "Look at that poor nice old man lying there"? Nope! All they said was "What's the name of that iris? I think I have it growing in my yard."

SOME THOUGHTS ON MULCHING Mary Pat Engel

MULCH - I've always loved bagasse (sugar cane - sterile) sold under the name Staz Dry which was used by poultrymen as chicken litter. The cost of transportation has increased so much that the industry cannot afford it. They now use wood shavings, which I tried last year and did not like. I've also used straw (but suspect it was hay, for the weed problem was horrendous). This year I was ambivalent and did nothing. Then came a heavy snow

in early November...later...low temperatures, but NO SNOW. I brought into the house for thawing four 40 lb. bags of organic peat which I had stored in the garage. This was used to put on top of roots which had heaved out of the soil due to freezing and thawing. I could not do anything with the soil (frozen), so my only hope was to cover the roots with this good soil. Previously I had mooched Xmas trees when they were discarded for collection. I was fussy and took only the best. A few (worth up to \$50.00 each) were so good that I sawed the limbs off and discarded the trunk. Other types I cut through the trunk about every 8 inches which gave me a trunk surrounded by a circle of ever-green limbs. This is less likely to blow away than small boughs. Of all my trees I had only 3 which were superior enough to have all the boughs removed individually because they were each about 4 feet or more long. These were placed over the beds, which I weeded. Imagine weeding in January!

I also cut off any leaves which had dried up since they were taken care of months ago. Then the boughs and trunk pieces were placed over the iris to give them protection from the sun until the next snow, and to keep the snow once we're lucky enough to get it.

For those people around here who tell me they need no mulch, this crazy year has further convinced me that I do need mulch. Staz Dry used to be \$1.85 a bale. It is now over \$8 a bale, so no poultrymen can use it, and the feed houses cannot afford to get it for gardeners who can use something else. Anyone have any better solutions?

1/16/80 - I remembered the golden year when the Junior Chamber of Commerce got stuck with 300 unsold evergreens for which they would have to pay a \$ fee per tree sent to the dump. Mary Pat of-

ferred to take the whole 300. They were thrilled and so was I. That year I cut all the branches off one side of the trees so that it would lie flat and not blow away. All the cut-off limbs were put on the soil and covered with the half trees, branch side up. What an aroma! And did the birds love it! In the spring I put out 150 one day and the rest the second week. Being an individual taxpayer I was entitled to that service so they sent a truck that chewed them up into mulch.

Reprinted from Region 2 NEWSLETTER, Spring, 1980.

A BOOST FOR OUR HYBRIDIZERS
FROM REGION 22 NEWS, JANUARY, 1980

SPINNING WHEEL (Nearpass '76) Since I seem to have let my prejudices toward plicatas completely overpower me, I'll continue with one other of the finest plics available. Just another purple plic it's NOT. The form is so full and round that the suggestion of a spinning wheel is there before any color is applied. Standards are white with a faint patterning of pale blue filagree spread evenly over them. Falls are white with precise violet line and dot plicating completely around them with spokes radiating from the haft. All this revolves around a goldish orange beard. You can actually see it going round and round!

DREAM ROMANCE (Burger '78) Here's another beautiful show bench iris, consistently opening two and three flowers on well spaced branches. Crisp, very pale orchid white standards contrast beautifully with orchid falls and are highlighted with a red-orange beard. Flowers are nicely formed and growth habits excellent.

Note: This is from Varietal Comments by Paul Black - Ed.

A BIT OF GARDEN ETIQUETTE

The late Betty Emmons

Open gardens are a privilege extended not just an iris grower's duty. Open garden is WELCOME - BE MY GUEST. Now as a visitor a few little things remembered and observed endears you to your host and puts out the welcome mat for you next year.

Every iris grower is flattered by the guest with a notebook. It's truly a compliment to grow a variety well enough to give your guest reason to make notations. Never mind the negative comments...I prefer to think all they write is positive.

As you stroll through the garden don't get the reputation of being a "Helpful Hannah" or you may know her by another name. Among them is "Gertie Groomer." She takes off spent blooms never considering the fact that her host may have made a cross on that blossom and she destroyed the iris of the century. Just keep your "cotton pickin'" fingers off all spent blooms. They may be somebody's mother.

Then comes "Weeda Weed Puller," oh me, not only does she embarrass her host, but she bends over to give vent to her groundskeeping with a vengeance, breaking over stalks, snapping off open blooms, and destroying the terminal bud on a single stalk.

And how about "Priscilla Purse Swinger?" Here she comes gyrating down the row, purse swinging wildly, truly a lethal weapon at the end of a strap. She snaps off blooms and stalks as she marches along leaving a devastated area

behind her. A demolition squad would be so proud of her.

Have you met "Cora Compare?" She's the one who picks one bloom and then another to carry to another clump to compare color, size, texture, etc. How tragic the poor thing didn't know she unwittingly performed an abortion and destroyed another hybridizer's dream.

Speaking of hybridizers, how delighted they are to have "Charlie Critic" wander in. He may also come in the form of "Picky Pat," "Superior Sam," or "Acid Archie." They all sing about the same joyful song. "Clyde Critic" had a whole row of seedlings from a cross of "Dirty Doll X Obscene Oscar" that was better than the host's offering. "CC" suggests he put a shovel to it at once, claims he has already destroyed his even though they far outclassed the host's. "Superior Sam" views the host's offering with "I've got one in this color and class to be introduced next year, and give it another year and it will have better branching than yours. You had better try another line."

"Acid Archie" is endearing too. He establishes such great rapport as he visits the junior hybridizer and says, "Forget it kid, there is not a substitute for experience. Now you take my nephew 'Charlie Carbolic,' he knows what he's doing. You had better talk with him before you work on this anymore. Be sure to see his new iris he named 'Credibility.' It's a cross between 'Watergate' and '18 Minute Hum.'" This is enough to keep any kid from doing his thing.

A few gardeners have experienced situations with "Penny Pet Lover." She thinks your iris garden is a beautiful comfort station. Little

does she realize that iris don't thrive well in poodle puddles to say nothing of the damage the pets do in romping through the iris.

Thank heaven the aforementioned kind of visitors are few. Most are wonderful and we love to have them come. Personally I have been very fortunate and had almost no problems in this respect. My biggest concern is local visitors who bring children and don't watch them. But these people are not true "iris connoisseurs," they are just the really smart ones who have one just like everything you have because it's purple, yellow or white. Of course, their clumps are much bigger too.

Go visit as many gardens as you can. I'll be looking for you here as I am at home all the time now. Let me add, if you do visit a garden and the owner is not home, look at the garden and then leave a note. It can always be slipped in the screen door. It is so nice to find a few friendly words, and while I always regret missing a visitor; the note is so nice to get.

May I leave you with a slight paraphrase of an old Irish prayer:

May the road rise with you
And the wind always at your back
And may the government always let you have
a full gas tank.

Reprinted from Sooner State Iris Society, February, '79

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