

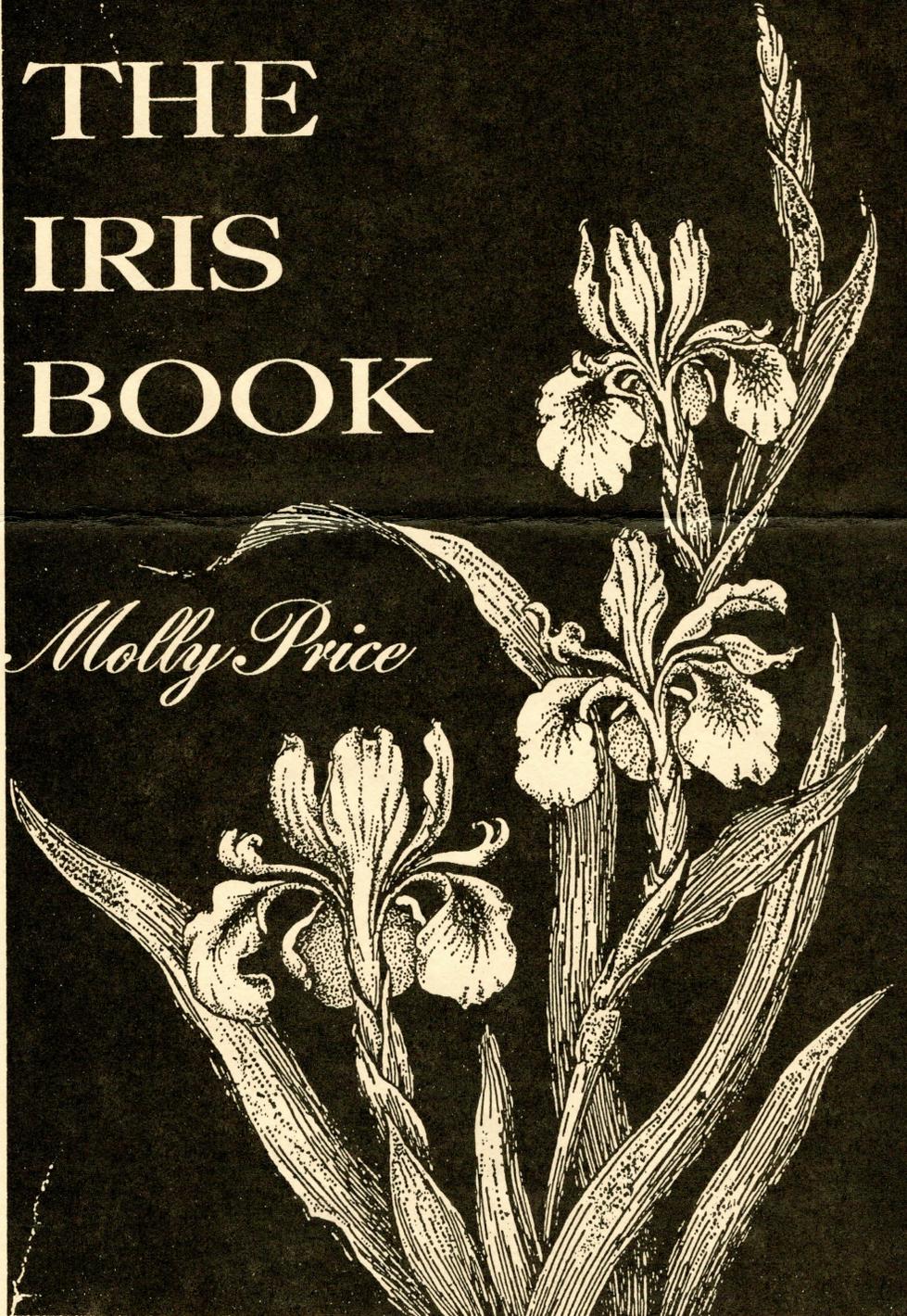
Newscast A.I.S.
R E G I O N F O U R

Volume 35, Number 3

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THE
IRIS
BOOK

Molly Price



In This Issue . . .

Region 4 President's Message	<i>Dr. E. Roy Epperson</i>	1
Two Days in Western China	<i>Dr. James W. Waddick</i>	2
Newscast Covers: The Irisarian's Heritage	<i>Phil Ogilvie</i>	8
Minutes of the Region 4 Spring Board Meeting	<i>Caryll Randall</i>	10
Assistant RVP's Report	<i>Ann Lowe</i>	13
Historian's Report	<i>Margaret Stone</i>	14
Parliamentarian's Report	<i>Rosalie Yerkes Figge</i>	14
Treasurer's Report	<i>J. Owings Rebert</i>	15
Finance Committee Report	<i>Dr. A.W. Rice</i>	16
Newscast Editor's Report	<i>Phil Ogilvie</i>	16
Judges and Judges' Training Report	<i>Dr. E. Roy Epperson</i>	16
Photography Report	<i>Dennis Stoneburner</i>	17
Robin Report	<i>Libby A. Cross</i>	19
Beardless and Species Report	<i>Diana Nicholls</i>	19
Median Report	<i>Dick Sparling</i>	19
Rebloom Report: Spring	<i>Joan Roberts</i>	20
Rebloom Report: Fall	<i>Joan Roberts</i>	21
In Memoriam		21
Chapter Reports		
Alleghany Highlands Iris Society	<i>John A. Dameron</i>	22
Carolina Mountains Iris Society	<i>Walter Hoover</i>	23
Central Virginia Chapter	<i>Cen Waters</i>	23
Charlotte Chapter	<i>Barbara Moeller</i>	23
Francis Scott Key Iris Society	<i>J. Owings Rebert</i>	24
Portsmouth, Chesapeake, & Suffolk Iris Society	<i>Bill Smoot</i>	25
Tidewater Iris Society	<i>JaNiece Mull</i>	26
Williamsburg Iris Society	<i>Nelda C. Pressly</i>	27
Update from Chesapeake & Potomac Iris Society	<i>Anita Ward & Sara Marley</i>	27
Update From Francis Scott Key Iris Society	<i>Dr. Fred Ladd</i>	28
John Weiler's Presentation at the Francis Scott Key		
Annual Fall Luncheon	<i>Anita Ward</i>	29
Region 4 AIS Symposium Results	<i>Dr. E. Roy Epperson</i>	31
Alfalfa and Iris		32
Mixing Alfalfa and Iris?!?	<i>Dorothy E. Guild</i>	33
Feeding Iris Alfalfa Pellets	<i>W. Terry Varner</i>	34
Comments On Alfalfa Pellets	<i>Terry Aitken</i>	35
New Members		36
From the Editor		38

CONGRATULATIONS

Vic Layman and Dayna Patrick, BRIS
Married - October 9, 1993

RVP's MESSAGE

As we enter 1994, let us look again at the goals for Region 4 that I set forth in the December 1992 issue of *Newscast*.

1). **To promote continued membership growth.** Our membership changed from 713 to 704. We continue to be second in membership among the regions of AIS. We should, however, grow in membership rather than remain stable or decrease.

2). **To promote continued development of judges and judges' training activities in the Region.** This has been an extraordinary year for judges' training opportunities in Region 4. There were seven (7) new apprentices appointed for 1993 and five (5) for 1994.

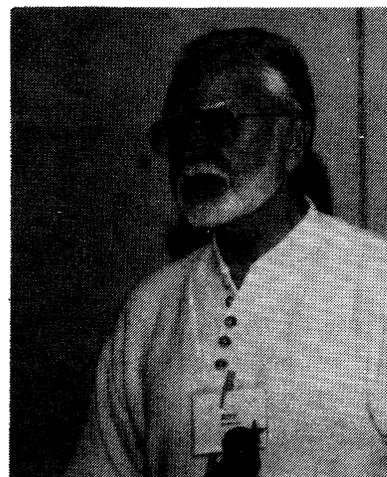
3). **To encourage and assist each and every Chapter and Society within Region 4 to become Affiliates of AIS.** Ten of the thirteen Chapters and Societies are now AIS Affiliates. I expect two more to affiliate in 1994.

4). **To work with Assistant RVP Anne Lowe in developing an Operating Manual for the Region and Guidelines for establishing and structuring a Chapter/Society within the Region.** This is a continuing goal. The By-Laws are being revised and a Policy Manual is in process.

5). **To work with the membership in North Carolina to more effectively align Chapter/Society boundaries.** This is a continuing goal.

6). **To work to bring the Library of the American Iris Society to a permanent home in Region 4.** At the Fall 1993 AIS Board Meeting, the decision was made to locate the AIS library at Dresden, Tennessee. Region 4 seems to have been at a disadvantage due to the National Agricultural Library being an arm of the federal government.

Region 4 has made significant progress in 1993. Working together, 1994 will show equal or greater progress!



TWO DAYS IN WESTERN CHINA

by Dr. James W. Waddick, KC

In the most recent *SIGNA Newsletter*, I wrote about my plans to visit and collect plants in western China. The trip was both highly successful and a frustrating experience. Perhaps that is the way of travel off the beaten path in western China. Transportation is always a difficulty and while new 'high speed' highways, railroads, and airports are under construction, these don't help today and in some cases make the roads even worse, avoiding detours and the mess of construction.

Regardless of media indifference, China has become the world's third largest economy, but that economy ranges from booming to dismal as you travel from province to province and from city to country. However, there is evidence of change, construction, and outside-influence everywhere. My travel was funded by a variety of agencies and aimed at observations of china's native iris species. These included the American Iris Society, the British Iris Society, and the New York Botanical Garden. Many other organizations and individuals have aided in this travel, including significant help from Region 4. My previous Chinese travels and iris information are chronicled in *Iris of China* (James Waddick and Zhao Yu-tang, Timber Press, 1992).

Short of another book, I can't begin to relate all the highlights of the six weeks spent in China on this trip. In the space allotted I can only mention a few plant events that will make you want to go there yourselves and help support the conservation of wild places everywhere.

After a long series of air hops, I met my old friend and associate, Professor Zhao Yu-tang, in Beijing, China's capital. He is the foremost Chinese expert on their native iris. Together we flew west and arrived in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province in mid-afternoon. We were met by Zhao's graduate student Dong Xiao-dong and were informed that our best chance to get to our next stop, Dali, by a bus that departed in one hour. This proved to be a thirteen-hour jaunt on sparsely upholstered seats designed for bodies of less than American stature. We drove through the night so the steep mountain roads and mad drivers could barely be seen in the darkness. Public rest-room stops every three hours and two meal stops helped to fill the time. In Dali we stayed overnight then boarded yet another bus for a twelve-hour trip to Zhong Dian, near the Tibet/Sichuan boarded.

As we drove into the town the sun was just setting. Dust blew around the wide streets and a young yak was honked out of the way of our bus. Pigs of various sizes scavenged the gutters and the people were obviously of Tibetan origin. Zhong Dian can be literally translated "Central Meadow," which is a good description of this location, a wide, flat, high plateau completely surrounded by even higher snow capped mountains. The town in the meadow is at about 10,000 feet above sea level, nearly twice the altitude of Denver, Colorado.



Yak (*Polphagus grunniens*).

Zhong Dian was just opened to 'foreign visitors,' (a Chinese euphemism for tourists) a month before our visit and only a single 'hotel' was certified for "foreign guests." This 'hotel' had rooms for one to three guests, a single bed each, with electric mattress pad, top sheet, heavy wool blanket and a wash basin. The 'wash room' was across the wide plaza and open only a few hours each day, with warm water for an even briefer period. This facility was simply for basic hygiene and laundry - no shower or bath facilities. The toilet facilities were in another corner of the plaza and minimal. However, the 'hotel' cost a mere \$1.53 per person per day. At this altitude even the stair climb to our third floor rooms seemed an accomplishment.

Daily forays were made into the mountains and always wonderful. We went to locations with names like "God's Hole" or "Dancing Phoenix Mountain" and found some interesting plants. The trees were often draped with hair mosses and encrusting lichens, but many smaller shrubs were severely cropped back by roaming herds of yaks. Bull yaks all wore warning bells around their necks to help in their detection and thus the individual could avoid annoying them and the resulting attack. In between and under shrubs we found some lovely pale yellow wild Fritillaries, purple and white Primulas (nearly 80 species in this area), and sparkling white or golden yellow Ranunculus. The hillsides are dotted with Rhododendrons (over 135 species in the locality) from tiny ground cover shrubs to red flowered "trees" reaching over 30 feet high. Flowers are small to inconspicuous to astonishingly large and brightly colored. I recall a small shrubby Rhodendron, only eighteen inches tall, with flowers the size and color of pristine Easter lilies.

Our goal of course was the native *Iris* and we were much too early at these altitude to see bloom, but we saw plenty of evidence. At the end of April new shoots were emerging from thick clumps of Sino-Siberian iris and old dry flower stalks with last year's empty seed pods marked the plants. Sino-Siberian iris comprise a group of related species somewhat allied to the typical siberian iris found in our gardens. These eight species have their distributions centered in southwest China. At this location the main species was *Iris bulleyana* with purple flowers marked with a large yellow blaze signal. At higher elevations *I. bulleyana* is replaced by *I. chrysographes*, with among the darkest purple flowers of any wild iris. With the addition of natural hybrids, positive identification was impossible out of bloom season.

From the still-standing stalks and last year's seed pods, we could clearly determine the density of these plants. We hiked for nearly four hours through almost continuous clumps of iris. We saw not just hundreds or thousands of clumps, but tens or hundreds of thousands of plants. I ached to be there in July when the mountains would be filled with a glorious mass of colors. Imagine all these iris blooming. Even if there were a single flower per stem and only one stalk per clump, all would have been a dazzling spectacle. In fact, most stems had two or three flowers and most clumps contained dozens of stalks. Surely this is one of the world's prime floral displays! I could see it in my mind's eye, even if not in reality, acre after acre of purple and gold.

As we hiked, we went higher and higher, eventually encountering patches of still unmelted snow. We balanced our way over fallen logs crossing melt-water streams and fought our way through bamboo (*Fargesia sp.*) thickets. At higher altitudes we saw *Iris chrysographes* in the same vast numbers.

I was again reminded of the stamina of the local Tibetan peoples when, after hours of hiking, we came across a small valley populated by a half dozen log cabins, fences and garden plots of some "homesteading wood cutters." This at close to 11,000 feet above sea level. Needless to say hiking, collecting, and scrambling over snow drifts at this altitude is tiresome, but the well adjusted locals get around without tiring. Near the ridge tops we could look across to the north slopes and see evergreen trees clothed in solid snow. Blowing snow gleamed in the sun at the mountain tops.

When we returned to our Central Meadow we were all exhausted by the demands of our little walk, but exhilarated by the floral display. Surely enough reward to make anyone's day. We stayed in Zhong Dian for four days before our downhill bus torture to Dali.

Weeks later in the trip and hundreds of miles further north in Gansu Province, we sought a specific iris rarity. My companion, Professor Zhao Yu-tang, had previously described a new species of iris which he named *Iris qinghainica*, after the largest lake in China, Lake Qinghai. The words "Quing" and "hai" literally mean "Blue Sea" and the province is named for this same natural wonder. The lake is found at high altitude (about 10,000 feet) and is about 1,800 square miles in area. Slightly salty, its fame is due, in great part, to the huge numbers of shoe birds that nest on a large island (Bird Island) near its southwest shore. It is a large body of water isolated by surrounding high mountains in a very dry province. Numerous species of animals, fish, and plants are found only in and around this location. It is not the easiest place to get into and out of.

By this time in our travels we were cutting things close as we were running out of time. Our only chance to find this rare iris was to make a fast run to the lake. We took the train from Lanzhou (Gansu Province) to Xining, Qinghai's capital. As we got off the train we were met by wet snow and a thin layer of slush on the streets; both bad signs. Neither of us had been here before and it took some searching to get transportation to the city's only "Guest House" for foreigners. Once there we were soon aware of this province's isolation. Professor Zhao and I had shared rooms across China, for weeks, without problems. Here we were told that it was impossible for a foreigner to share a room with a native of China. We would have to have separate rooms in separate parts of the huge "hotel" complex.

The Chinese language does not identify gender through pronouns (there is no him, her, he or she, only indefinite pronouns). Names only hint at the bearer's sexual identity. I was assigned a room with two other foreign guests. When these two "men" turned out to be three women, the staff was so embarrassed that they allowed the professor and I to share a room, if only to cover their errors.

Once settled in our room, we walked through the cold rain to a dismal little restaurant and planned our lake side excursion. The only way we could manage to arrange travel to the lake the next day was by renting a private car at a high rate. We went to our cold room and slept with the dismal prospect of more rain, or worse snow. Under either circumstance, slim chances of finding our target plant.

We awoke early to grey skies, but neither rain or snow, there wasn't even frost overnight. The car arrived promptly and we stopped to stock up on picnic supplies, since we would not be near any source of food at the lake. As we traveled west out of the city, the altitude continued to increase. The road we took is the main highway from Xining to Golmud, a Tibetan city currently undergoing gold fever from recent finds there.



1.青海鸢尾 *Iris qinghainica* Y. T. Zhao: 植株。 2.华夏鸢尾 *Iris cathayensis* Migo: 植株。 3—4 天山鸢尾 *Iris loczyi* Kanitz: 3.植株, 4.果枝的一部份。 5—6准噶尔鸢尾 *Iris songarica* Schrenk: 5.植株 6.果枝。(于振洲绘)

Hundreds of "covered wagons" loaded with gold miners and their supplies lined the road. These crude carts were mostly powered by a single pony or jackass although the typical hand tractor, powered by a small gasoline engine and towing a flat trailer on which the miner rode, was also common. Each outfit was flimsy by United States' standards, yet hundreds of these treasure seekers made their way in a slow file across what would involve nearly 800 miles of mountain road, complicated by snow further west.

Our road ran still higher, finally encountering snow nearly a foot deep on the Sun Moon Mountains, which are over 11,000 feet above sea level. Even with steep cliffs, rough roads, and an underpowered vehicle, we plowed our way to a pass and began our drop down to the lake's valley. As we began the descent the sun finally appeared and warmth seemed vaguely possible. Dodging gold miners, roving herds of yak, sheep, and goats, we drove on. Things seemed increasingly likely for success.

Iris qinghainica was described by Zhao from a number of dried herbarium specimens, but no botanist or horticulturist had ever seen living material. The only collection data indicated this plant was found "on the shore of Lake Qinghai." With an area of 1,800 square miles, the shoreline presented us with thousands of miles of potential habitat. And which shoreline -- north, south, Bird Island? We blundered on!

As we got within sight of the lake, the land was still well dusted with patches of snow preventing us from getting any closer to the lake. Finally we decided to stop and hike the mile or two to the shore, abandoning our selves to luck. We hiked through snow, then mud, always with increasing sunshine and warmth. At this altitude the sun can be quite strong and we bundled up to keep it off our heads and exposed arms.

Within a hundred yards of our parked car, we stumbled on *I. qinghainica* just emerging from winter's dormancy. This is an odd iris, a member of the group known as "Tenuifoliate Iris." All of these iris have their main rootstock (rhizome) deep underground (some as much as six inches). They all live a very harsh environments and during the winter the foliage is shredded off, by gravel snow and other elemental forces, and the remains blown away by the wind. In spring the fine leaves emerge quickly, flowers follow and seeds are formed before the short summer comes to an end. The plants are adapted to cold, dry climates and are rarely encountered in cultivation.

We soon were able to observe dozens of plants of this iris and collected a number of specimens. As we continued our hike we made numerous observations and also found specimens of *Iris lactea*, a very common iris in China, but previously unknown at this latitude. By noon we arrived at the lake shore and settled down to a modest lunch of fruit and bread. The lake shore was edged by small colorful shells of a type of snail found only in this lake. The water was still icy with snow covered mountains reaching right to the lake shores. Of course the lake is large enough that we could not see across and the steady winds produced whit capped waves. A harsh, but beautiful place to picnic.

Satisfied with our lunch, lake side stroll, and especially iris discoveries, we hiked back to the car. On the drive back we were told that we had time to stop in a local lamasery. We jumped at the opportunity to be a bit "touristy." A quick side trip brought us to the hugh Taer Lamasary the headquarters of the "Yellow Sect" of the Lamaistic branch of Buddhism. A series of pagodas,

temples, dagobas (dome-shaped monument containing relicts of Buddha or a Buddhist Saint), and living quarters are scattered through a small mountain valley. Seven of these holy spots are open to visitors and it is a popular spot for Chinese tourists as well as religious devotees. I was the only foreigner that day.

"Taer Si" is an "enchanted place" built in 1577. The present Dalai Lama was born nearby. For years the temples were closed and monks imprisoned, but, since 1979, the monks as well as a "Living Buddha" have been allowed to return and the temples have been opened to visitors. We were allowed to enter a different world of meditation chambers lined with hundreds of yak butter lamps and rooms lined with thousands of alcoves, each containing an identical religious statue.

The lamasery specialty is the art of butter sculpture. Monks work long hours to color, shape, carve, and arrange pure firm yak butter into elaborate and detailed scenes. Scenes of religious and folk stories, including accurate depictions of people, animals, flowers, trees, and even the "Great Wall" and the Yangtze River, all in yak butter. While regular festivals display new creations, the high altitudes and unheated buildings allow a "permanent display" of one scene approximately forty feet wide and nearly ten feet tall that includes a larger-than-life statue of Buddha and dozens of scenes from his life. Individual petals on flowers and the leaves on the trees are sculpted in technical detail and amazing effects are achieved for flowing water and facial expressions.

We were fortunate enough to see monks practicing their traditional meditations, chants, and musical accompaniments. The temples are each walled and some are gold roofed. All are landscaped with obvious care for certain trees and plants related to religious figures. Tibetan prayer wheels are abundant. From small wheels, the size of tin cans, to huge drums, ten feet high by ten feet wide, are everywhere. Visitors are encouraged to keep the wheels turning. Colorful banners, scarves, and carvings serve to further ornament the buildings.

After filling our eyes and minds with the strange wonders, we drove back to Xining and one of the finest meals we ate in all of China. Both Xinghai and Gansu Provinces were part of the ancient "Silk Road" and Gansu is famous as the home of the "Flying Horse" or "Cloud Horse," an antique funerary object now housed in a museum in Lanzhou and much duplicated in the United States. Although these provinces are still strongly Islamic, the Chinese government has been moving more of the Han majority into this region. The Islamic influence remains strong typified by the numerous mosques and minarets punctuating the skyline. Our driver brought us by a circuitous route of back streets and rooms to a Moslem restaurant where we dined on such delicacies as "Fried Sheep (a loose translation)," "Eight Treasure Rice," "Meatballs," "Qinghai Fish," and much more.

By the time Professor Zhao and I returned to our rooms at the Xining Guest House we felt satisfied by our botanical finds, temple tours, and Moslem repast. A truly unique combination of satisfaction for the mind, the soul, and the body. The return trip to Lanzhou seemed to pale in comparison to the apprehension we felt at the start of this short excursion.

I've tried to give you a feel for some of the ups and downs of only two of the events out of nearly six weeks crossing a country with many shapes and shades of interest and wonder. I hope that you may now have a hint of the plant wonders and are, thereby, encouraged to make your own visit someday. China is becoming increasingly open. Access, especially to the cities on the Eastern

Coast, is becoming easier and less expensive. At the rate China is westernizing and urbanizing, I urge you to see the natural sites by going bravely off the beaten track into the extreme northeast, southwest, and into the heart of it all.

Thanks must be given to all those people who helped in this trip. In addition to the generous donation from Region 4, and the other organizations mentioned above, numerous adventurous individuals provided funds and support to continue a project that began in 1985 and continues today. In Region 4 these included the Fredricksburg Area Iris Society, Mr. William Kuykendall, and Mrs. Bobbie Lively-Diebold. By exchanging visits and plants, and helping with travel and learning, I hope both Chinese and Americans can benefit while appreciating their respective plant gifts. As our world shrinks and wild areas decline we need to encourage conservation and appreciation of all worlds.



NEWSCAST COVERS: THE IRISARIAN'S HERITAGE

by Phil Ogilvie, C&P

This issue's cover is the "Dust Jacket" of Molly Price's 1966 book, *The Iris Book*, published in Princeton, New Jersey by D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc. also in New York, London, and Toronto. The original is six and one quarter inches by nine and one half inches, consisting of 204 Arabic numbered pages, plus 20 Roman numbered pages preceding the text.

As for many of you, this book represents my first literary exposure to the "Wonderful Rainbow World of Iris." It may very well be the most widely circulated book on our favorite flower, in spite of the fact that publishers guard the exact numbers of a book distributed like the gold in Fort Knox, we can make some kind of informed guess. The original Van Nostrand publication was a successful garden book, which for that period probably translates into sales of 10,000. In 1973, Dover reprinted it for the first time and have reprinted it an additional five times. For a title to remain in print with Dover, it is most likely selling about 1,000 copies a year. That would give us a reasonable estimate of 30,000 copies sold. A very impressive number for a garden book, especially when considered in the context of 10,000 copies making a best seller in Canada.

While there seems to be some uncertainty about the year of Mrs. Price's birth, she seems most likely to have been born in 1903, in Anderson, Indiana. She graduated from DePauw University with an A.B. in 1925. After graduation she moved to New City, New York. New City is in Rockland County north of New York City and west of the Hudson River. There she pursued her gardening and writing interspersed with political activity on behalf of civil rights. She founded the Rockland County Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union in 1939 and in 1944 she ran for the State Senate on the American Labor Party ticket. In 1950 she and her husband, John M. Price, built a new house "in a small woods clearing ringed with dogwood trees." In 1960, she revised Sidney B. Mitchell's *Iris for Every Garden*, after Professor Mitchell's death. Frederick W. Cassebeer said of Mrs. Price, in the context of her revision of *Iris for Every Garden*:

. . .an eminent irisarian and writer on horticultural subjects, . . .[she] has revised the book with Boswellian fidelity; she has faithfully maintained the point of view, even the style of the author and has made changes and additions only where they have been necessitated by new developments in breeding, new varieties, new treatments for iris diseases, and advances in

the various categories of dwarf irises, which are currently assuming greater importance in the modern gardening picture.

She also contributed free lance articles to *Flower Grower*, *Home Garden Magazine*, *Flower and Garden*, and the garden section of the *New York Times*. She crowned her writing career in 1966 with the publication of *The Iris Book*. She was an accredited judge for the American Iris Society as well as holding memberships in the Horticultural Society of New York, the British Iris Society and many of the sections of AIS. She served as the president of the Median Iris Society and as the editor of that section's journal, *The Medianite*, from 1960 to 1961.



What species grower could resist a bearded iris hybridizer who makes the statement, "I especially enjoy growing the species behind horticultural varieties." In *The Iris Book*, she not only devotes an entire chapter to "Native American Beardless Irises," but also gives significant space to iris other than those that are tall and bearded. Which of us has not felt, but been unable to express the thought contained in, "As I succumbed to the lure of irises, my garden became progressively lopsided -- and increasingly satisfying?" The writing is rich as well as informative. It is a joy to read her descriptions, for example of her beloved SDBs:

"Une jeune fille en fleur" well describes the artless grace and charm of the ten-to-fifteen-inch standard dwarf bearded hybrids, which have a much wider appeal than the miniature group. In the brief period of their existence [the first introduction of SDBs was by Paul Cook in 1951], these irises have already become indispensable to the May garden.

Because I breed them myself, my opinion may be thought to lack objectivity. Let me say that I was attracted to this group of irises originally because I could immediately visualize them in my garden. They were the something that had heretofore been missing from the May garden picture of bulbs and perennials.

Her knowledge of iris was more than academic having introduced six SDB cultivars: BLUE IVORY, 1963; BROWN-EYED KATIE, 1963; LITTLE SAPPHIRE, 1963; LITTLE WITCH, 1964; MOON SPINNER, 1964; and WHISPERYLLA, 1964. MOON SPINNER won an HM in 1967 and was a "Judges' Choice" in both 1967 and 1968. She was never uncritically accepting, even of her own creations:

The equation *superior tall bearded variety X pumila = superior standard dwarf bearded seedling* isn't always valid. The first *plicata*, 'Dale Dennis', was important for breeders rather than gardeners. The leaves of some otherwise attractive varieties are too large and coarse; some, like my own first introduction, 'Blue Ivory', grow slowly.

On November 2, 1984, at the age of 81, Molly Price died of a cerebral hemorrhage. She left in addition to the cultivars she developed, two sons, a daughter, five grandchildren, one great-granddaughter, and, to us, a rich heritage of good garden writing, including a most appropriate epitaph, "The Genus Iris is a wonderful genus to get tangled into your heart."

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Executive Board, Region 4, AIS, October 2, 1993
Westpark Inn, Williamsburg, Virginia

RVP, Dr. Roy Epperson, called the meeting called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.

Copies of the agenda were made available to those present. Ann Lowe moved that we accept the agenda. The motion carried.

Secretaries minutes of the Fall 1992 Board Meeting were approved as printed in the Newscast. Parliamentarian, Rosalie Figge, asked that Respectfully submitted not be added to her reports [As this is a recommendation of the American Association of Parliamentarians, it will now be part of the style for *Newscast* in the future - Editor.]. The Reblooming report submitted by Joan Roberts at the Spring meeting will be published in this issue of Newscast.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

RVP: No Written report

Assistant RVP: Written report - Ann moved to accept the offer of C&P to host the 1996 Spring meeting. Motion carried.

Immediate Past RVP: No report

Secretary: No report.

Treasurer's report: For Period July 1, 1993 to October 1, 1993 [see below report for this period plus the period October 1 to November 1, 1993 - Editor] There is a typographical error printed in the August Newscast page 10. Under expenditures the \$25.00 should read \$100.

Historian: Written Report

Parliamentarian: Written report.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Finance: Written report

Membership: We have 88 new members and 83 cancellations, therefore we are holding our membership steady. Regional welcome letters along with Donna Hare's 1984 article "How to grow an iris - you don't know what you are getting into!!" is sent to all new members.

Regional contest - 8 Regional members have recruited new members. By the middle of December one of them will have won a hundred dollars worth of irises.

National Contest - 7 affiliated societies and 7 individuals have entered the national contest.

Newscast Editor's Report: Written report.

Judges Training: Written report.

Auctions and Awards: No report.

Robins: Written report.

Photography: Written report.

Beardless and Species: Written report

Conventions:
See Asst. RVP report.

Median Iris: Written report.

Reblooming Irises: Spring and Fall written report enclosed

Publicity/Public relations: Ken Roberts remains available if someone wants or needs any help with publicity.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Alleghany Highlands: Written Report.

Blue Ridge: No Report

Cabarrus County: No report.

Carolina Mountains: Written Report.

Charlotte: Written Report

Central Virginia: Written report

C & P: No written report

Eastern North Carolina: No written report

Francis Scott Key: Written report.

Fredericksburg Area: No written report.

PC SIS: Written report.

Tidewater: Written report.

Williamsburg: Written report.

NEW BUSINESS

RVP Roy Epperson reported that he believes that every organization should have printed guidelines, operation manuals, and a policy manual etc. Roy stated that we are in the process of putting together a total composite manual that will have all of the official policies passed by the board; the convention booklet that was prepared as part of our organization a year ago; the booklet that is being prepared by Ann Lowe, as Assistant RVP, on how to establish a Chapter. The manual will also have job descriptions of all the positions in the Region so that when someone is asked to chair a position they will know exactly what they have been asked to do.

In the process of getting all of this together, Roy requested Rosalie to serve as chair of an ad hoc committee to study the by-laws and proposed revisions. At the same time Roy asked Dennis Stoneburner to chair and ad hoc committee to review all of the official minutes of the Region 4 board. Dennis and Rosalie, as requested, had made reports to Roy prior to this meeting. Susan Grigg (ENC) Dennis Stoneburner (BR) worked with Rosalie on the by laws committee, Roy served as ex officio of the committee.

The ad hoc committee on Region 4 Bylaws proposes, that the written revised bylaws, and the standing rules be sent to all members of the board within a very short time period requesting written comments. Rosalie has already requested written comments but has not received any. In the March 1994 issue of Newscast will be the proposed revised bylaws and standing rules. These will be voted on at the May 13th board meeting 1994.

Roy explained that Standing rules of an organization are those rules that are policy of the board, but can be changed at any board meeting with a majority vote. Bylaws however, can be changed only by prior written notice.

The major change that the committee is proposing is the elimination of the Executive committee. The committee is also proposing seven standard rules, which cannot go into effect until the prior notice process and the voting at the Spring meeting.

The Standing rules and any changes in the Bylaws will be published prior to the Spring meeting.

The report of the ad hoc committee on region 4 policies. Dennis Stoneburner chaired this committee and worked with Rosalie Figge and Kay Cooper. They read all the official minutes from 1978 through the present and pulled out every official action that the board had taken. There are only sixteen actions, some of them we have incorporated into the standing rules. Others that are general operational procedures will be pulled together and become part of the Regions operation manual.

Dennis Stoneburner proposed that a copy of all Board minutes be kept by the Historian, RVP, and the current Secretary.

The Chair called for election of the nominating committee

The nominating committee for 1995

Chairman:	Joan Roberts	MD
	Mike Lowe	VA
	Barbara Moeller	NC
	Margaret Stone	WV
	Phil Ogilvie	DC

The committee was elected by acclamation. The slate of officers for the 1995 calendar year will be published in the March issue of *Newscast*. The vote will be held at the Spring board meeting 1994.

Caryll Randall
Secretary

[During this business meeting it was made clear that the editor was to make no editorial changes in the minutes, that they were to be printed in the form they came from the Secretary, after being corrected by the RVP. No attempt has been made to bring these minutes into conformity with the form and style of the rest of *Newscast* - Editor.]



ASSISTANT RVP's REPORT

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the present format of our Spring Regional meetings, places the burden of hosting these meetings upon the larger and more established societies within the region. A spring regional traditionally includes garden tours. A number of our newer and smaller chapters do not have gardens or established iris plantings suitable for the level of touring required for a regional. Thus, Blue Ridge, C&P, FSK, Fredericksburg, Eastern NC, and Tidewater are in the hot seat, so to speak. With this in mind, it is more than ever important that the smaller chapters take on the task of hosting the fall meetings which stage the regional fall show but do not involve garden tours.



Our Region 4 Assistant RVP tending to the most important business of any convention.

It is especially important to line up future spring meetings so that guest irises can be received and planted 2 years in advance in the gardens of the host chapter.

The following regional convention sites have been established:

Spring 1994: Blue Ridge -- May 12-14
Fall 1994: FSK

Spring 1995: Fredericksburg
Fall 1995: Alleghany Highlands

Spring 1996: C&P (subject to Board approval) [Approved by the Board, Fall 1993]
Fall 1996: OPEN

Spring 1997: Eastern North Carolina
Fall 1997: OPEN

C&P has graciously offered to host the Spring 1996 meeting. I recommend that the Board accept this invitation.

I would be more than pleased to hear from any society willing to take on the Fall Meeting in 1996 and 1997 and any other open meeting date which takes your fancy.

Ann Lowe



HISTORIAN'S REPORT

As Historian of Region 4, I would again like to thank all of the clubs that have sent in their letters providing updated information on what they are doing. As everyone is aware, these letters are so important in order to provide a record of what has happened over the years in our Society. I will look forward to receiving each and every one of your informational letters, so that they can be included in our organization's historical record. Please send your letters to my address, found below, thanks again for all of your help!!!

Margaret C. Stone, Historian
517 E. Washington Street
Lewisburg, West Virginia 24901



PARLIAMENTARIAN'S REPORT

The RVP appointed the Parliamentarian as chairman of the committee to revise Region 4 bylaws.

This was done with Dennis Stoneburner and Susan Grigg as members of the Committee.

The Parliamentarian served on a committee appointed by the RVP to study Region 4 policies as headed by Dennis Stoneburner.

Rosalie Yerkes Figge, Parliamentarian



TREASURER'S REPORT - REGION IV - A.I.S.
For Period July 1, 1993 to October 1, 1993

July 1 Balance \$ 11,857.37

Receipts

Donation - C&P	\$ 1,000.00	
Donation - Eastern N.C.	100.00	
Interest on Account (3 mo.)	<u>92.28</u>	

Total Deposits \$ 1,192.28

Complete Totals \$ 13,049.65

Expenditures

Rosalie Y. Figge		
<i>Robert's Rules Booklets</i>	32.70	
Dunn-Rite Printing		
<i>August Newscast</i>	1,425.37	
Lowes		
<i>Circulation Managers</i>	<u>190.08</u>	

Total Expenses \$ 1,648.15

October 1 Balance \$ 11,401.50

Receipts

Fall Auction Williamsburg	\$ 738.00	
Interest on account (October)	<u>28.52</u>	

Total Deposits \$ 766.52

Complete Totals \$ 12,168.02

Expenditures

NONE		
Total Expenses	\$ -0-	

July 1 Balance \$ 12,168.02

J. Owings Rebert, Treasurer
Region IV - A.I.S.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

I have examined the Treasurer's report of July 1, 1993, and conferred with J. Owings Rebert. It appears that everything is in order and shows a favorable balance.

Dr. A.W. Rice, Chairman



Newscast EDITOR'S REPORT

The August 1993 issue of *Newscast* was distributed much too close to the deadlines for the fall meeting, the fault was mine, *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*. Contributors were much better about meeting the deadline for this issue of *Newscast*. In addition to ongoing health problems, my computer developed a terminal health problem and after the computer wonks had fooled around trying to fix it, finally giving up and sending me a new-to-me used computer, and after I finished changing peripherals, programs, and files to this computer, I had lost a month. Thus the delay.

730 copies of the August *Newscast* were printed and 667 mailed.

Phil Ogilvie.
Phil Ogilvie, Editor



JUDGES AND JUDGES' TRAINING REPORT

For 1994, the following changes occurred in the Roster of Region 4 Accredited Judges: Master judge from Active to Retired (3); Garden judges advanced to Master/Active (5); Apprentice advanced to Garden (3); new Apprentices appointed (5); dropped due to non-timely Ballot for two consecutive years (1).

In 1994, Region 4 has the following Roster summary of Accredited judges:

18	Accredited Garden
12	Master : Active
10	Master : Retired
9	Apprentice
1	Emeritus

Of these 50 accredited judges, 27 are quota and 23 are non-quota. Region 4 has a quota maximum of 106 accredited judges for 1994.

1994 Roster of Judges, Region 4

Accredited Garden

Mrs. Keith K. Cooper
Libby A. Cross
Mr. S. Herman Dennis III
Mrs. Joseph P. Dufresne
Gloria Fairhead
Mr. Walter Hoover
Mr. M.B. Lowe (Mike)
Mrs. M.B. Lowe (Anne)
Mr. Clarence E. Mahan
Ms. Diana Nicholls
Mrs. Fran Nunn
Mrs. Caryll Randall
Mr. Richard Randall
Ms. Joan Roberts
Mr. Daniel Schlanger
Mr. James D. Stadler
Ruth E. Walker
Mrs. Andrew C. Warner

Apprentice

Sandra S. Bryan
Dr. L. Bruce Hornstein
Richard H. Huger
Sara H. Marley
Dave L. Merrill
Phil W. Ogilvie
Ken Roberts
William C. Smoot
Dennis Stoneburner

Master/Active

Dr. E. Roy Epperson
Mrs. Frank H.J. Figge
Mrs. Glen Grigg, Jr.
Mr. Charles L. Hare
Mrs. Charles L. Hare
Mrs. Paul D. Kabler
Mrs. Troy Karriker
Dr. A.W. Rice
Mrs. A.W. Rice
Mr. Richard Sparling
Mrs. Richard D. Steele
Mrs. James H. Trent

Master/Retired

Mrs. Charles M. Cox
Mrs. Miles P. Farrar
Mr. Maynard E. Harp
Mrs. Maynard E. Harp
Mrs. Polly K. Price Irby
Mrs. Fred M. Miller
Dr. Joseph B. Parker, Jr.
Mr. F.G. Stephenson
Mr. David G. Walsh
Mr. Dennis Wilkie

Emeritus

Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg

Dr. E. Roy Epperson, Chair

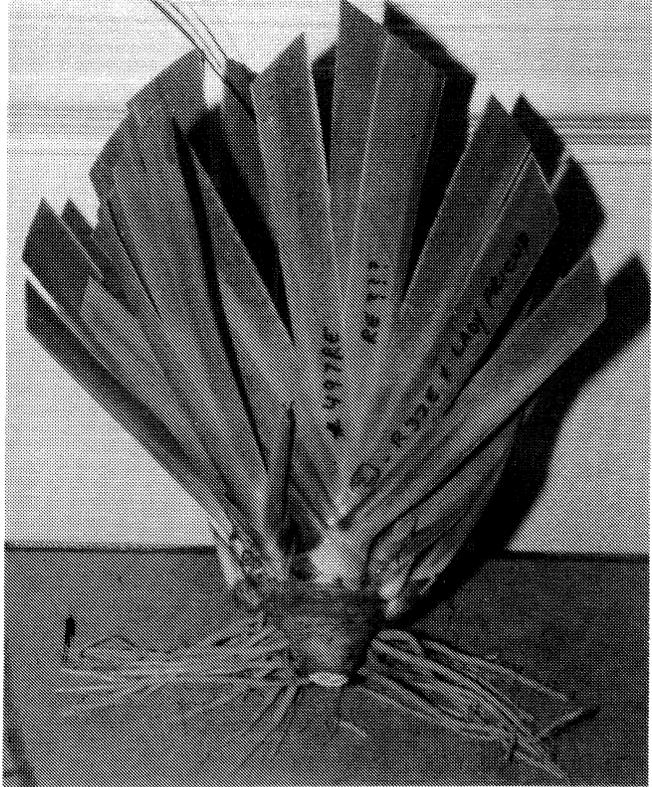
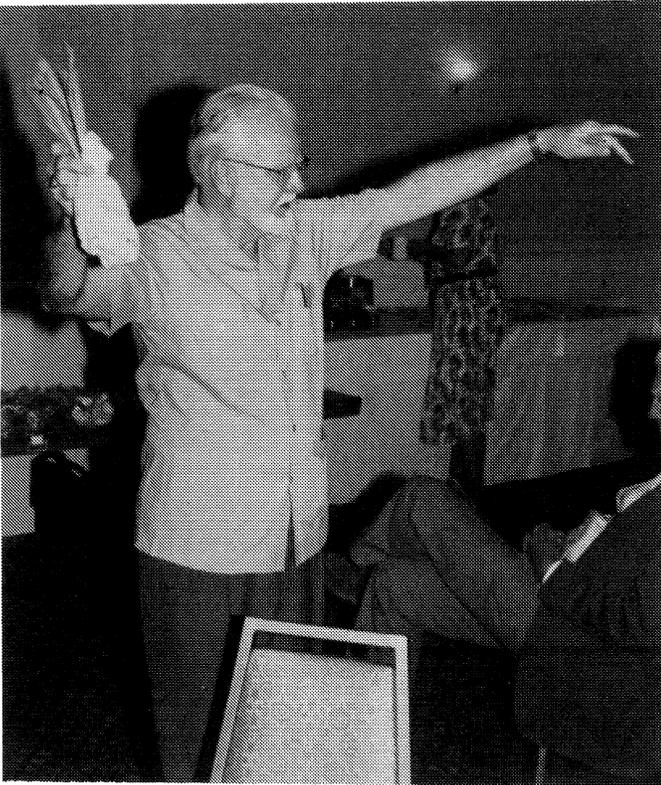


PHOTOGRAPHY COMMITTEE REPORT

From Spring 1993 to present, there have been two requests for slides within the region. I have put together a good group of slides reflecting damage from Iris Borers. I continue to need slides from the general membership on recent introductions, Siberians, Japanese, and Louisianas.

Dennis Stoneburner, Chairman





In lieu of a report from the Auction Committee, let these photographs of the most recent event speak for themselves!

Photographs by Dennis Stoneburner

ROBIN REPORT

There has been no change in the Robin flights since the 1993 Spring Regional. The Median Robin continues to be the most active. The Wild Ones is a large one and moves slowly, but it does move. Presumably Ramblin' Robin is also flying. Ruby Buchanan, who directs both of these two has been having ups and downs health-wise, and I do not hear from her often, but she does seem to be taking care of her job as director all right. The Royal Four has apparently dissolved for good. Mike Lowe has been planning to revive it for several years, but it is not yet back in flight. Pinfeathers is down for lack of new people wanting to learn the basics of iris. I have been unable to send Phil any tid-bits for Flight Lines, as none of the Robins has been my way since early spring. Hoping for better things.

Libby A. Cross



BEARDLESS AND SPECIES REPORT

A special "Thank You" to the Tidewater Iris Society for hosting the 1993 Japanese Iris Society Convention. They put in a lot of hard work and energy to host the convention. We had three JI shows in the region. Maybe next year we can make it four shows in Region 4? The beardless bloom was great this year. The plants were bathed in moisture all spring. The bath quit in June. From then on it became a dry bake oven. Most of the beardless were a bit unhappy. Late July held a pleasant little surprise to find a very nice stalk on *Iris fulva*. The beardless iris were very late in making new roots this year, as a result of the heat and dryness. Now that the heat has broken and the rains have come, a renewed hope goes on as we look forward to next season's blooms.

Diana Nicholls



MEDIAN REPORT

As always, we are continually trying to add as many Median Display Gardens as we can. There are gaps in our areas, with no garden anywhere near large groups of our membership, that need filling. If you can meet the requirements consider joining us. The requirements are: be willing to open your garden to the public, be willing to submit a report once a year, and have a reasonable number of Median iris. There is no specified minimum number, just a good mix and of course some of the newer ones. Simply -- SIGN UP. This also applies to the Dwarf Iris Display Gardens. Let me know. One thing about Miniature Tall Bearded and Aril Medians I must constantly remind myself of, is that some times newly planted rhizomes will lose all their foliage and it looks like the iris is lost. But this is the nature of some of these iris. Don't touch them until the fall of the year after you planted them as they may just be slow to show their wings. Of course if you can see that the rhizome is actually rotten, do your duty, but otherwise just LEAVE THEM ALONE. You probably will be surprised next year. The two iris with Miniature in their name are shallow rooted and can be difficult to get started. It was recommended to me, by a well known grower of them,

to plant them in a small pot when you get them and don't put them in the ground until they start to grow. Then transplant them while without disturbing the soil. I've told a couple of people this little trick this year, and they reported fantastic results. These were rhizomes that had been out of the ground for over a month and looked as though they had all dried up, but they hadn't. Now if I would only try my own advice, I wouldn't be concerned about whether mine were going to make it. Maybe next year.

Dick Sparling



REBLOOM REPORT

Spring

It was very exciting to see so many irises in the fall. We had enough stalks to make a lovely bouquet for FSK's Fall Luncheon held on October 18th. Much to my delight, I had a perfect stalk of VIOLET MUSIC (Mahan '90). Since Clarence was our Guest Speaker at the luncheon, VIOLET MUSIC could not have bloomed at a more opportune time. We also took a beautiful stalk of Lloyd Zurbrigg's seedling #HH 22-1-1 which has just been introduced as JOAN'S PLEASURE. Although very difficult to describe, this iris can equal any "oncer" for form and substance. It is a very well ruffled cream and glowing misty violet combination with closed standards and flaring falls. To add to the excitement, at the luncheon, Dick Huge and Bruce Hornstein brought stalks of SUNNY DISPOSITION (Zurbrigg '91) and VICTORIA FALLS (Schreiner '77). The day was complete when Carol Warner walked in with a delightful stalk of ROSALIE FIGGE (McKnew '93), named to honor Rosalie Yerkes Figge, who has been mento to many of us and done so much for the Iris Society. Phil Ogilvie reported rebloom on QUEEN DOROTHY (Hall '84), EARL OF ESSEX (Zurbrigg '80), BILLONAIRE (Byers '86), IMMORTALITY (Zurbrigg '82), and last but not least Don Spoon's new introduction LUCIE ANDRY, that supported two stalks with four blooms open at one time. It has a light lavender bloom with lemon beards. This lovely iris was named to honor Phil's wife Lucie Andry. Lloyd Zurbrigg reports that NORTHWARD HO (Zurbrigg '91), a pink-brown blend has been outstanding this year and LITTLE SHOWOFF (Hall '89), a ruffled icy blue SDB has lived up to its name, reblooming for him in NC despite being hit by frost. Since my last report on October 1, 1992 [see *Newscast*: Vol. 34, No. 3 (December 1992)] we have had rebloom on a number of irises. In order of their appearance were PERFUME COUNTER (Zurbrigg '72), PLUM WINE (Weiler '86), ETERNAL BLISS (Byers '88), WITCH OF ENDOR (B. Miller '78), VIOLET MUSIC (Mahan '90), PINKNESS (Byers '89), BABY BLESSED (Zurbrigg '79), CORAL CHARMER (Wright '83), PINK ATTRACTION (Hall '88), HARVEST OF MEMORIES (Zurbrigg '85), SUNNY DISPOSITION (Zurbrigg '91), HOLY NIGHT (Mohr '83), SOLSTICE (Weiler '92), BROTHER CARL (Zurbrigg '83), EARL OF ESSEX (Zurbrigg '80), GRACE THOMAS (Zurbrigg '80), NOW AND LATER (Zurbrigg '72), MIDNIGHT CALLER (Byers '90), SUMMER OLYMPICS (R.G. Smith '80), HEART OF ICE (Byers '89), SEASONS (Weiler '92), THEN AGAIN (Byers '89), and THRICE BLESSED (Weiler '82). Unfortunately the large buds on JUICYFRUIT and COLORWATCH were stopped by an early frost.

Joan Roberts



REBLOOM REPORT

Fall

Thoroughly convinced that I was able to predict when several of my favorite irises would rebloom, Mother Nature stepped in and made it quite clear that "she" is running the show! I knew that CHAMPAGNE ELEGANCE wouldn't grace us with her presence until August - WRONG - June 30th. Surely we won't see IMMORTALITY until late August or early September - July 1st. Even JULY SUNSHINE didn't show up until mid-August. BROTHER CARL has never rebloomed for us until October. He appeared on September 4th. VIOLET MUSIC, another October bloomer, gave us a beautiful stalk with 4 blooms open on September 2nd. Many of you have probably already heard the news - IMMORTALITY was second runner-up for the Dykes! Our heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg for bringing reblooming irises out of the closet and into the limelight, where they belong. Lloyd reported to me that HI (Byers '89), an IB rebloomed in November in NC. He also had rebloom on LITTLE SHOWOFF (Hall '89) in June, after a floriferous spring bloom; ZURICH (Byers '89); and JENNIFER REBECCA (Zurbrigg '85). Rosalie Figge reset all of her irises this year but ANXIOUS was true to its name, reblooming on September 2nd, and another stalk coming. Doris and Owings Rebert report rebloom on QUEEN DOROTHY (Hall '84), TOUCH OF SPRING (Applegate '72), CORN HARVEST (Wyatt '77), JEAN GUYMER (Zurbrigg '77), SEPTEMBER SONG (Brown '60), and SIGN OF LEO (Zurbrigg '77). Carol Warner reports rebloom on CORAL CHARMER. In our garden again in order of their appearance were CHAMPAGNE ELEGANCE (Niswonger '87), IMMORTALITY (Zurbrigg '82), BUCKWHEAT (Byers '89), JUCIEFRUIT (Byers '89), ETERNAL BLISS (Byers '88), CORAL CHARMER (Wright '83), ROYAL SUMMER (Applegate '71), JULY SUNSHINE (Brown '65), LO HO SILVER (Byers '89), BELVI QUEEN (Jensen '76), THEN AGAIN (Byers '89), SIGN OF LEO (Zurbrigg '77), NORTHWARD HO (Zurbrigg '91), HEART OF ICE (Byers '89), JENNIFER REBECCA (Zurbrigg '85), VIOLET MUSIC (Mahan '91), BROTHER CARL (Zurbrigg '83), LADY EMMA (Jones '88), HARVEST OF MEMORIES (Zurbrigg '85), HALLOWED THOUGHT (Zurbrigg '77), TAJ RANI (Blyth '78), SOLSTICE (Weiler '92), CORN HARVEST (Wyatt '77), SUNNY DISPOSITION (Zurbrigg '91), and REFINED (Weiler '87). There are tall stalks on AUTUM CIRCUS (Hager '90), BILLIONAIRE (Byers '87), MATRIX (Hall '91), RENOWN (Zurbrigg '91), DOUBLE INDEMNITY (Wyatt '73), ORANGE HARVEST (Jones '88), MISTY TWILIGHT (Byers '88), CONCOCTION (Byers '90), and GRACE THOMAS (Zurbrigg '80). Buds just peeking out of the fan, include CLARENCE (Zurbrigg '91), PROGRESSIVE ATTITUDE (Innerest '92), and GRACE THOMAS (Zurbrigg '80).

Joan Roberts



IN MEMORIAM

Samuel F. Sipe (Maryland)
Walter Smith (Virginia)

CHAPTER REPORTS

Alleghany Highlands Iris Society

Greetings to all members of region 4. I am sorry I cannot be with you in beautiful Williamsburg for the convention. The new paper machine in Covington is up and running and everyone is working hard as we progress with start-up shakedown. Though we basically know what to do and what to expect, we have to perfect and polish our techniques. New people have to be taught to work, not only efficiently, but also safely. Faults in the design, manufacturing, and installation of the equipment must be pinpointed and corrected. Computer logic programs must be written, tested, and then rewritten in many instances. Needless to say, we are all very busy. Every person is scheduled from a minimum of 48 hours per week to 72 hours a week and many work more than that. Still, our hope is that the first of the year, things will be settled down and we can start scheduling vacations. If all goes well, I should see you at the spring regional and there is even a long-shot chance that Linda and our daughter, Mary, will fly with me to Oregon for the National. We will have to decide if we want to take Mary out of school for it.

Speaking of Mary, we are very proud of her. She is the only youth member of Alleghany and she has just been notified that she is a third place winner in the AIS coloring contest. Her artistic ability exceeds mine. Many of you are familiar with the plight of Alleghany Highlands. We organized in 1990 with barely enough members to receive our affiliation, and promptly lost two of these. Then in 1992 things got better, Region 4 decided to assign all AIS members living in the West Virginia to this chapter. Thus, Alleghany inherited all West Virginia members. Now we have 33 members, and another problem. How do you get people together when they don't even have any idea where the others live? It is 325 miles from Martinsburg, WV, to Hamlin, WV. What would the Houcks think if you asked them if they wanted to go to Hamlin for a meeting? Or if you asked the folks at Wileyville or Masontown to drive 250 miles to Bluefield, they'd probably try to have me committed! Anyhow, we send newsletters to everyone and try to convince them that we are glad to have them. We also had our April meeting in Monterey, VA. John and June Wright and Bill Kuykendall came down from Keyser, WV. We had a nice salad plate lunch and what I thought was a very nice visit. Although the day was too short and we had to say good-bye too soon, I certainly hope we can do this again. In September, we drove to Ghent, WV, and enjoyed lunch at the home of Lena Nekoranec. Her home sits right next to Flat Top Lake and in the back yard is her own private boat house and dock. Nice!!! She could have easily fed 20 more people, those who didn't go cannot possibly comprehend what they missed. Lena had saved all winter the piece I had printed in the Beckley, WV, newspaper last year and joined this spring. We also signed two new members when we had our rhizome sale in June. We netted about \$25 at the sale. For us, that is a success also. We are still looking forward to hosting the Fall '95 Regional. We hope many of our West Virginian members will be with us for that. We think we can find something for everyone of them to help with. You folks can help too. We could use a lot of advise of what you have done when you hosted a regional and whether or not it worked. Also, if you have any good recruiting tips, please share them with us.

President, Alleghany Highlands Iris Society,
John A. Dameron

Blue Ridge Iris Society

NO REPORT

Carolina Mountains Iris Society

The Carolina Mountain Iris Society will provide a hands-on program on the planting and care of Japanese irises. The society will meet at the lake-side picnic shelter at Blue Ridge Community College on October 2nd. After a brief discussion on Japanese irises followed by some light refreshments, the group will proceed to the area where plantings were done two years ago. Those clumps that are in need of dividing will be divided and ten additional pot-grown specimens will be added to the lake-side planting. In addition to the above, the group will tour the new horticulture department greenhouse and finalize plans for a bearded iris planting in a display garden area with other plant societies. Our best wishes for a successful regional meeting as we do our bit to promote iris here in the southern Appalachians.

President, Carolina Mountains Iris Society,
Walter Hoover



Central Virginia Chapter

The first anniversary meeting of the year was held on September 18, 1993, at St. John's Woods Clubhouse. The group continues the slow, uphill struggle of organization. Tentative plans were outlined for a Standard Iris Show on May 8, 1994. The choice of location is still undecided, as several options are being considered. Although nothing has been finalized, the ultimate goal of this and other fund raising activities is to assist the Louis Ginter Botanical Garden of Richmond in developing an outstanding Iris Garden. There is a profusion of well established yellow *Iris pseudacorus* on the banks of the pond within sight of the new Tea House which will open this fall. Mr. Cameron Hall has already been in touch with the Director of Horticulture. Two new members were welcomed to the organization, but we are sorry to report that our capable secretary, Mrs. Jan Elliot, is moving to Atlanta, Georgia. Her duties are being performed by Mrs. Sharon Eggleston, Membership. During the meeting, Mike Lowe gave a brief demonstration of the rudiments of dividing a clump of iris, trimming the roots and fan of a rhizome, and labeling for the benefit of a new member in need of this information. Programs for the coming year were planned: such as field trips to visit iris gardens, plant exchanges, and other educational activities.

Reporter, Central Virginia Chapter,
Cen Waters



Charlotte Chapter

Many thanks to those who made it easier for a Chapter to become an AIS affiliate! We will begin in January. Our first meeting (one of three per year) is in September and it is a PLANT AUCTION. WE made \$570! Iris predominate, but many perennials from our members' gardens draw the people - and most join. In 1948, dues were \$3 and \$4; they still are, but we added a

Patron category that pays for the traveling silver cup engraved with the name of the person who grew "Queen of the Show." And next year we'll have the medals! PR is the name of the game! We received good publicity and have many persons call about the meeting. Most join, even if they cannot attend. Our garden tour last spring had such good PR we had to limit the number of cars by car-pooling! We added 25 members in a two-year span. At our last meeting we added four more, one a Patron! Three others are considering. Not many join AIS, but we are promoting it better and, at least, they are growing iris - even at a condo!

B.J. and Frances Brown are slowing down. Many of you know them because he was an RVP and hybridizer and both were very active as judges. They have moved to Region 5 in South Carolina, but we will keep them forever! For we have made them honorary Patrons! We will honor them with "the Brown Day" on November 9, our next covered-dish luncheon. B.J. received international PR in *The National Gardener* of the National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc. with his TB, ELEANOR YATES, a beautiful yellow and white iris. Eleanor Yates, from Charlotte, was installed as National President in May. Note that Dave Niswonger took advantage of this also. Note all hybridizers! With remontant or reblooming iris becoming more popular, frost becomes our nemesis. You can thwart it by rinsing off the frost before the sun comes up. I have used water from the hose, but find it easier to take a couple of milk jugs full of tepid water out and pour a little on each bloom coming along.

President, Charlotte Chapter,
Barbara Moeller



Chesapeake & Potomac Iris Society

NO REPORT

Eastern North Carolina Iris Society

NO REPORT

Eastern Shore Chapter

NO REPORT

Francis Scott Key Iris Society

Dr. Fred Ladd, F.S.K.'s reporter to Newscast will be forwarding an up-to-date report after our Annual Fall Membership Luncheon of October 16. In the meanwhile, we will just touch on a few current facts. Our August Newscast covered all activities to July 1. I might mention that the official show reports did not give the seedling award recipients for this year. F.S.K. is proud to acknowledge that Joan Roberts captured this honor at both F.S.K.'s and C and P's spring shows respectively. On July 10, probably the hottest Saturday of this summer, our annual rhizome sale took place with tremendous success. Our teamwork was outstanding, our helpers most efficient, and our buyers most eager. The results made for an almost sell out. Next year's sale will be held

at the same location, the Watson's Garden Center of Lutherville. We again enjoyed a wonderful picnic this year on July 25. Carol and Andy Warner were our hosts, with their gardens being beautiful as usual. There were lots of fun and food, and more sunshine and high temperatures than needed. In a few words to sum it up -- a good time was had by all. Regrettably our percentage of attendance was on the low side. Just preceding the picnic, the board allotted time for its summer meeting session. Mostly routine agenda items were taken care of. A nominating committee was appointed to prepare a slate of officers for our annual fall election. Our special feature this year for our fall meeting will be a presentation by Dr. John Weiler of Fresno, California. An all day program is planned, starting at 9:30 a.m. The meeting will take place at the Sheraton Baltimore North, which is located in Towson, on Dulaney Valley Road. Members throughout the region are invited. The cost will be \$14 per person. All Chapter and Society presidents received a letter with details. Our scholarship program to Dundalk Community College is apparently going well. For this October's meeting we have invited, and hope to have as our guests the scholarship recipients selected by the college for this year. With the conclusion of this event, F.S.K. will be looking forward to its next executive board meeting and plans for the new year. Remember, next fall, it's a garden tour for '94 -- F.S.K., all the way.

President, Francis Scott Key Iris Society,
J. Owings Rebert



Fredericksburg Area Iris Society

NO REPORT

Portsmouth, Chesapeake, & Suffolk Iris Society

Portsmouth, Chesapeake & Suffolk Iris Society recently celebrated its first birthday. During this first year we held our First Annual "you gotta start somewhere" Show with 22 exhibitors and 108 entries. We also held two successful iris sales and a couple of exhibitions at local garden centers. From our first year organizational stage, we enter our second year of building and growth, and we are developing our "niche" within the community. Already we've begun our second year by establishing a Japanese, Louisiana, and Lloyd Zurbrigg Honorary Bed at the Portsmouth City Park. These beds are in highly visible areas and we hope to use them to attract new members and interest in irises.

GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR

- 1). Increase our visibility in the community by additional display gardens in other cities.
- 2). Launch an aggressive membership program.
- 3). Encourage member interaction & bonding through more social activities within the society.
- 4). Interface with the community's other garden clubs, and organizations in an effort to publicize and promote PCSIS and gain new members.

PC SIS would like to publicly thank Mr. Rich Randall for serving as our first president. His hard work, guidance, and dedicated efforts have caused a dream of a society in the Portsmouth, Chesapeake & Suffolk area to become the reality of an AIS affiliated society.

President, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, & Suffolk Iris Society, Bill Smoot

Tidewater Iris Society

This has been a very busy time consuming period for the Tidewater Iris Society. It has driven people to the depths of despair and to the pinnacles of success. And it has taken its toll on the members and the families of the TIS members. Probably the best lesson we learned was that we needed more workers in our Society. The Tidewater Iris Society hosted both the Region IV convention and the National Society of Japanese Iris in May and June. We enjoyed hosting these conventions and the opportunity of seeing many old friends as well as making new friends. Any society that has hosted such functions is well aware of the work involved before and during these affairs. However, the work necessitated after the SJI Conference was mind boggling. All the guest Japanese Iris from the various private gardens as well as the Norfolk Botanical Gardens had to be dug, divided and then sent to the various people. This was not only a hard job physically, but the time involved was unbelievable. But we did get all the guests dug, all the bloom stalks taken off, and all the rhizomes, after many hours of work, divided. Then the final stage of sending all the iris across the United States and England was completed. However we were far from finished digging, dividing, and replanting Japanese Iris. A few years back the TIS placed a Hazzard Japanese Iris Bed at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens. Arthur Hazzard hybridized 88 Japanese Iris. Thanks to the donations of many people, we now have 60 of the Hazzard iris in this display bed. One of our upcoming goals is to locate the remaining Hazzard iris and complete this project. This year was the year to dig, divide, and replant the Hazzard bed. A few members of our club have spent hundreds of hours working with Japanese Iris. We have almost become experts on digging, dividing, and replanting or repotting the Japanese Iris. This the Norfolk Botanical Gardens under went major changes. Previously, the City of Norfolk was in charge, at the first of the year, the management of the gardens was taken over by the Norfolk Botanical Garden Society. We have seen new faces and new ideas come into the garden. There are great plans for expanding the buildings in the garden. Our Japanese beds are remaining in the same place: however, the rest of our iris beds have been relocated. Therefore, we have been digging and digging. The management of the Gardens is very interested in preserving collections such as the Hazzard collection. They are talking about having a sister-botanical garden also set up a Hazzard Collection so we will two different sites for the collection. When they were told that, apparently, two of the Hazzard varieties have been lost, they felt that it was extremely important that another display collection bed by established. So this is in the plans for the future. They are also interested in establishing other iris collection beds. If anyone has any suggestions for this please contact JaNiece Mull, 7112 Fox's Lair Court, Norfolk, Virginia, 23518, or (804)858-5521.

We have had two very successful sales this summer. The next project, the fall Norfolk Botanical Garden sale, will be held in two weeks. We held our annual fall picnic at the Norfolk Zoo this year. Many members and friends attended this event and a good time was had by all. Last year TIS donated iris to the zoo. Two of our members went out and planted the iris. Since that time, one of our members has been following through on the care of these iris as well as donating additional iris for theses beds. One of our major projects for the coming year is to establish display beds in the Tidewater area. We feel that by establishing iris beds in both public and private sectors of the area we can better promote the love of iris. We have been very lucky this year in not only recruiting a number of new members, but, through the unselfish efforts of some of our seasoned members, getting these new members, together with some previously inactive members, involved. Probably the most productive way of getting an involved membership has been through the efforts

of the Membership Chairman, Caryll Randall, always being present at all fund raisers, social events, and other activities where there have been a gathering of people interested in horticultural activities. The education time has proved to be a good selling point for joining TIS. A update on our change from a calendar year to a fiscal year, it appears that it is working very nicely. The new slate of officers took over in August. This is giving the officers and committee chairmen time to regroup and organize for the coming year. Probably the best liked and most enjoyable new addition to our society was the "Education Time" which was held prior to each of our meetings. It was a good learning experience for both old and new members.

President, Tidewater Iris Society
JaNiece Mull



Williamsburg Iris Society

Williamsburg Iris Society submits the hosting of the 1993 Fall Regional as its report.

President, Williamsburg Iris Society
Nelda C. Pressly



UPDATE FROM CHESAPEAKE & POTOMAC IRIS SOCIETY

compiled by Anita Ward & Sara Marley, C&P

On Saturday, November 13th, C&P officers and board held an all day planning session at Anita Wards home on Lake Lariat in southern Calvert County, Maryland. Both new and old officers attended, relaxed, ate well of a pot-luck luncheon, and planned the next year's activities. It was decided to follow the excellent example of Tidewater Iris Society and hold half-hour education sessions for new members before each regular meeting. Additional details will appear in the March *Newscast*.

Date	Education Topic/Speaker	Program
Saturday 01/22/94(1pm)	"Kinds of Iris" - Phil Ogilvie	Tour of Bonzi Collection - Judges' Training "Awards & Balloting" - Dr. E. Roy Epperson, National Arboretum Auditorium, DC
02/12/94 or 02/19/94	"Iris Culture" - Dick Sparling	Luncheon with Invited out-of-Region speaker "The Little Ones," Holiday Inn Crown Plaza, Rockville, MD
Sunday 03/20/94		Annual Recognition Luncheon at Blaney Marlow's, Silver Spring, MD
Sunday 04/10/94	"Preparation of Rhizomes for a Sale" - Gloria Fairhead	"Hybridizers' Panel" AHS, River Farms, Mount Vernon, VA
Saturday 05/07/94		Tour of Members' Gardens and garden judging
Sunday 05/15/94		Spring Show, National Botanical Gardens, Washington, DC

Saturday	06/18/94 or	Beardless Show, jointly
Sunday	06/19/94	Sponsored with FSK - TBA
Saturday	07/16/94	Bearded Iris Sale, TBA
Sunday	08/14/94	Annual Picnic, Plant Exchange, and Bearded Iris Auction, at Wards' on Lake Lariat
Sunday	09/18/94	Beardless Iris Sale & Auction, Sparlings'
Sunday	10/09/94	Reblooming Show, Slide Show, and Bookfair, TBA
	11/??/94	"Antique Plants" - with Invited out-of-Region speaker, TBA

The Officers for 1994/5 are: President - Sara Marley; Vice-President - Gloria Fairhead; Secretary - Ruth Filsinger; and Treasurer - Blaney Marlow. Preliminary planning was also done for the 1996 Spring Region 4 Convention, which will be hosted by C&P.



UPDATE FROM FRANCIS SCOTT KEY IRIS SOCIETY

compiled by Dr. Fred Ladd, FSK

Our Iris season concluded with the 27th Fall luncheon held at the Sheraton Towson Conference Hotel on Saturday, October 16th. Members exhibited a fine selection of Reblooming Iris, numbering over twenty varieties, that supplemented the expert presentation upon rebloomers by our distinguished speaker, Dr. John Weiler, President of the Reblooming Iris Society, and from Fresno, California. Dr. Weiler also held a pre-luncheon judges' training workshop. The following members were also elected as officers of our society for 1994: President - J. Owings Rebert; Vice-President - Dr. Daniel Schlanger; Treasurer - Harold Herrman; Recording Secretary - Marjorie Bosen; and Corresponding Secretary - Richard Huge.

We have also adopted a tentative calendar of Chapter activities for 1994

Saturday, April 9	Spring Luncheon Meeting, time & place to be announced (TBA)
Saturday, May 28	Spring Iris Show, details TBA
Saturday, June 18 or	
Sunday, June 19	Beardless Iris Show, sponsored jointly with C&P, details TBA
Saturday, June 25	Bus trip of gardens on tour for 1995 JI Convention details TBA
Saturday, July 9	Iris Sale, Watson's Garden Center, York Road, details TBA
Sunday, July 17	Annual Picnic at the garden of Dr. L. Bruce Hornstein & Richard Huge
Friday, October 14	Fall Regional Convention hosted by FSK at the Sheraton
Saturday, October 15	Towson Conference Hotel, details TBA

Congratulations to Joan Roberts who won a silver medal and the Queen of Show with a miniature tall bearded iris LADY EMMA, at the Regional Fall Meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia, on October 1st and 2nd.

JOHN WEILER'S PRESENTATION AT THE FRANCIS SCOTT KEY ANNUAL FALL LUNCHEON

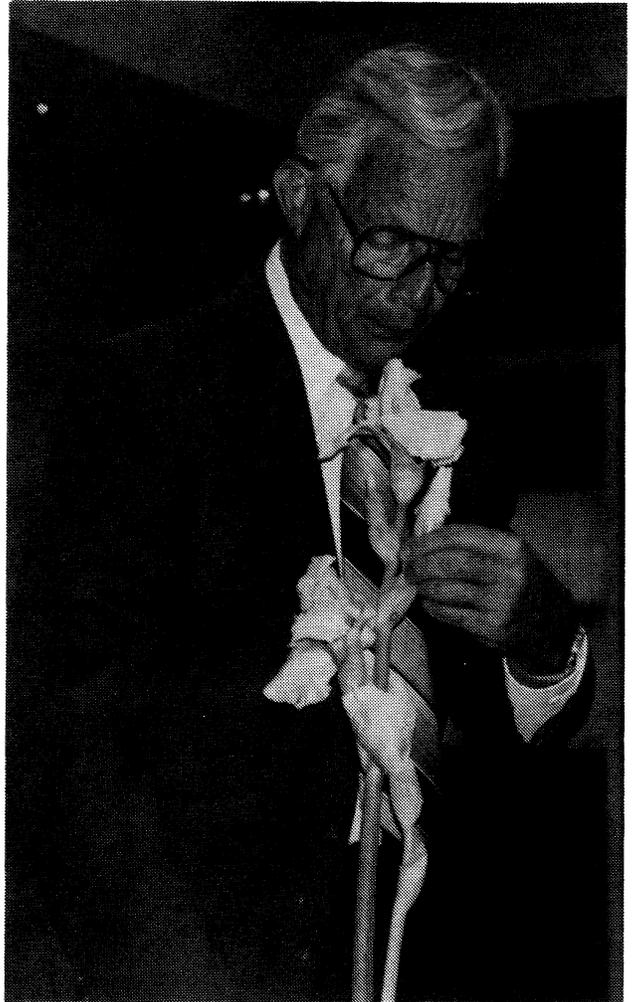
A Synopsis
by Anita Ward, C&P

Part I Judges Training:

Dr. Weiler announced that his training would be on Show Bench Judging, with emphasis on Rebloomers. He said that Bench Judging (as opposed to Garden Judging) was a measure of horticultural skill and show grooming, and that each stalk should be judged by standards of perfection for that variety or cultivar -- that is, the quality that would appear in the best growing conditions. Judges should be looking for **Horticultural Perfection** plus **Perfect Grooming**. For example, height counts, the cultivar should be judged by the standards as it is **normally** grown, no prize should be given if an entry is **under-grown**. Consequently, judges should know 200-500 currently popular iris (of the 70,000+ named cultivars).

Rebloomers have different bloom traits seasonally, and spring and fall appearances are frequently different. For example, in the fall the stalk may normally be more compact, blooms may be bunched, with variation in color intensity, and there may be a higher bud count. It is legitimate to create a special section for Rebloomers in a Spring Show, within the Seedling Class as well as other sections. Stalks should not be judged by the number of blooms open; however, if there are multiple blooms, each must be judged against the standards for perfection. Partially open blooms are to be judged as if they were fully open, not as buds. For an accredited AIS show, no more than one blue ribbon is to be awarded for each class, since there can only be one that is the **best**. Similarly, only one second and one third place ribbon for each class. The judges, however, may award as many honorable mention ribbons as the class merits.

The "Queen of Show" is the best specimen of the show. The Queen is selected from only the top winners of each section -- those which have been awarded rosettes as the best specimens in each section. For this honor, judges should demand "nit-picking" perfection. Competitors should take the time to groom to perfection: straightening stems, removing any insects, softening spathes, trimming foliage, etc. A single finger mark in the bloom on the stem or a water spotted tepal can



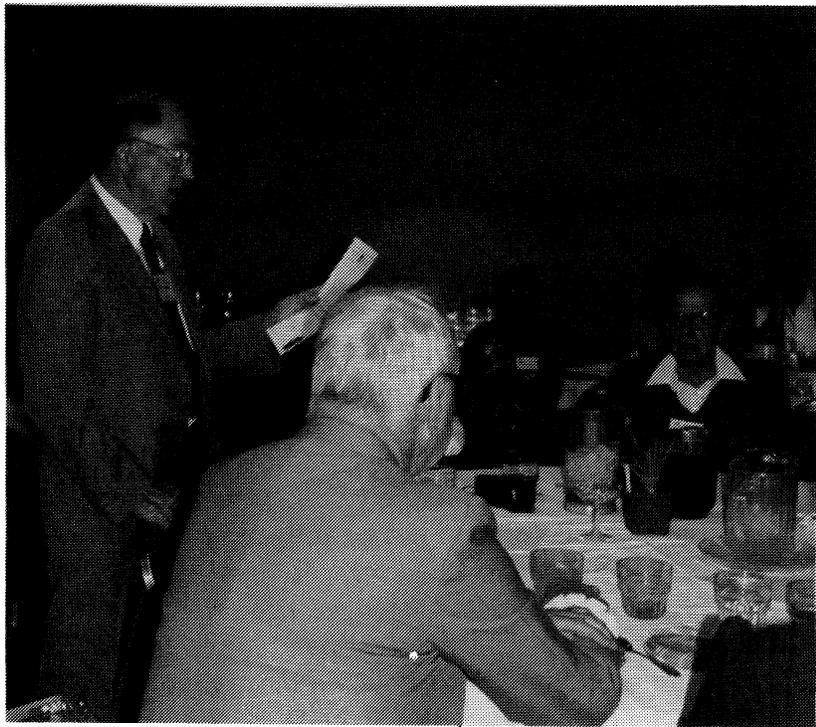
Photograph by Dr. Dan Schlanger

disqualify an otherwise perfect specimen from "Queen of Show." Judges may **never** touch a specimen, but they may ask a clerk to touch them, when the judge believes it necessary.

In the Seedling Class, grooming **doesn't** count. Judges are to evaluate entries for traits desirable in improving the cultivated iris. In Tall Bearded these traits currently include: the breadth of the fall, substance, branching, high bud count, and bud-spacing. Seven is presently the minimum acceptable bud count for a seedling, even though iris with lesser bud counts have been given awards in the past. **N.B. Dr. Weiler strongly recommended that all judges get the current revised AIS Judges Handbook, and pay attention to its standards.** Garden merit for seedlings should include: plant vigor, floriferousness, succession of bloom, and number of buds in a socket. The single most important factor in judging this class is whether the seedling is distinctive, new and improved over what is already available. For example, an award would be appropriate for a seedling that extends the color range. The Best Seedling automatically gets an Exhibition Certificate (EC). It is okay **not** to award a Best Seedling in any show; however, if an award is given, there can only be **one** best. There can be any number of ECs awarded; the seedling ballot provides for any judge to write in any worthy entry, any seedling receiving at least five vote will receive an Exhibition Certificate.

Part II: Rebloomers

"I have come here to poison your minds." (or was it to un-poison?) In any case, Dr. Weiler immediately set about dispelling myths, such as: "Iris have their own season!" or "Rebloomers don't have good form!" The first reblooming iris of record was collected from the wild in Portugal some 500 years ago -- *Iris biflora* (today known as *I. subbiflora*). At least thirty additional species have since been found in which at least some clones rebloom. Unfortunately, the wild ones have low fertility. The benefits of rebloomers include the at least double bloom period (in many there is multi-bloom or even continuous bloom) and extended



Photograph by Dr. Dan Schlanger

color in the garden. Most of the development of rebloomers has been by backyard hybridizers. Monoculture is one of the major problems of the big commercial growers. To control pests they fumigate the soil, such soil does not challenge seedlings. Thus, by being started in backyard gardens, rebloomers are naturally selected for vigor and resistance to pests.

Following his remarks, Dr. Weiler presented an iris-lover's "pig-out" -- two hours of gorgeous slides, **ALL** rebloomers, all growing at his Rialto Gardens. Re-printed from the *Chesapeake & Potomac Iris News*.

REGION 4 AIS SYMPOSIUM RESULTS

by Dr. E. Roy Epperson, ECIS

1994

* * * * *

100 Ballots were cast = 14% of the Region 4 membership.

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 59 | VANITY DM 1982 | 16 | ANNA BELLE BABSON |
| 56 | IMMORTALITY | | MICHIGAN PRIDE |
| 52 | TITAN'S GLORY DM 1988 | | TIDES IN |
| 39 | DUSKY CHALLENGER DM 1992 | 15 | BAYBERRY CANDLE |
| | SONG OF NORWAY DM 1986 | | BLUE SAPPHIRE DM 1958 |
| 38 | EDITH WOLFORD DM 1993 | | CHRISTMAS TIME |
| 36 | SIVERADO | | COPPER CLASSIC |
| 35 | STEPPING OUT DM 1968 | | LEMON MIST |
| 33 | BEVERLY SILLS DM 1985 | | QUEEN OF HEARTS |
| | SUPERSTITION | | RUFFLED BALLET DM 1983 |
| 31 | BRIDE'S HALO DM 1978 | 14 | BABBLING BROOK DM 1972 |
| | JENNIFER REBECCA | | JOYCE TERRY |
| | JESSE'S SONG DM 1990 | 13 | BETTY FRANCES |
| | LACED COTTON | | CAMELOT ROSE |
| | LADY FRIEND | | EASTERTIME |
| 30 | VICTORIA FALLS DM 1984 | | GOLD GALORE |
| 29 | DOVER BEACH | | KILT LILT DM 1976 |
| | SKATING PARTY | | LACY SNOWFLAKE |
| 24 | HOLY NIGHT | | SKYHOOKS |
| 23 | GOING MY WAY | 12 | ALTRUIST |
| | MYSTIQUE DM 1980 | | CRANBERRY ICE |
| 22 | BREAKERS | | EXTRAVAGANT |
| | SPINNING WHEEL | | ORANGE SLICES |
| | STUDY IN BLACK | 11 | BEST BET |
| 21 | BEFORE THE STORM | | CUP RACE |
| | CELESTIAL STORM | | DAZZLING GOLD |
| | HONKY TONK BLUES | | MULLED WINE |
| | INFINITE GRACE | | SHIPSHAPE DM 1974 |
| | MARY FRANCES DM 1979 | | THEATER |
| 20 | PERSIAN BERRY | | TUT'S GOLD |
| | RINGO | 10 | CATALYST |
| | SAPPHIRE HILLS | | MASTER TOUCH |
| 19 | CHAMPAGNE ELEGANCE | | NAVY STRUT |
| | PURPLE PEPPER | | QUEEN IN CALICO |
| | THORNBIRD | | THRILLER |
| | WINTER OLYMPICS DM 1967 | | TROPICAL FRUIT |
| 18 | DEBBY RAIRDON DM 1971 | | WILD JASMINE |
| | EVERYTHING PLUS DM 1991 | 9 | AFTERNOON DELIGHT |
| | GAY PARASOL | | CRYSTAL GLITTERS |
| 18 | LORILEE | | GRAND WALTZ |
| | SUPREME SULTAN | | LEDA'S LOVER |
| 17 | CODICIL | | OLYMPIAD |
| | HINDENBURG | | PARADISE |
| | | | PINK TAFFETA DM 1975 |

8 ACOMA
BUBBLING OVER
GYPSY WOMAN
RUSTLER
VISUAL ARTS

7 BLACK FLAG
BLUE CHIP PINK
GINGER SWIRL
INSTRUCTOR
JEAN HOFFMEISTER
LATIN LOVER
PROUD TRADITION
TENNISON RIDGE
TOMORROW'S CHILD

6 BERTWISTLE
CHICO MAID
DREAM LOVER DM 1977
EAGLE'S FLIGHT
FEMME FATALE
GUADALAJARA
NEW MOON DM 1973
ROSETTE WINE
SON OF STAR
SWEETER THAN WINE
TRIPLE WHAMMY

Cultivars receiving five (5) votes (11)

ANN, DOUBLE AGENT, DUSKY DANCER, INTO THE NIGHT, MARIA TORMENA, MONTEVIDEO, PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE, RAPTURE IN BLUE, RARE TREAT, RASPBERRY FUDGE, and VICTORIA LACE

Cultivars receiving four (4) votes (16)

ALICE GOODMAN, BOLD GOLD, CRANBERRY CRUSH, DARK SIDE, FANFARON, GENTLE DRAGON, LOYALIST, MALAGUENA, NIGHT RULER, OCTOBERFEST, POINT MADE, PURE-AS-THE, SIGHS AND WHISPERS, SMART ALECK, SNOWBROOK, and SWEET MUSETTE

Cultivars receiving three (3) votes (26)

ABSTRACT ART, BLUE ARISTOCRAT, BURGERMEISTER, CONJURATION, DESIGNER GOWN, DIVINE, FRINGE BENEFITS, FRINGE OF GOLD, GOLDEN GALAXY, INDIAN CERAMICS, JAZZABEL, KAREN, MARRIAGE VOWS, MOTHER EARTH, ORBITER, OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE, PRESENCE, RANCHO ROSE, RAVEN ROCK, SILVER FOX, SKYBLAZE, SULTRY MOOD, TASSELENA, TOP GUN, VICTORIA FRILLS, and WIDE HIPS

Cultivars receiving two (2) votes (29)

AMERICA'S CUP, BLOWTORCH, BURGUNDY BUBBLES, CARIBBEAN DREAM, CLASSIC EDITION, COUNTRY BRIDE, DANCEAWAY, DAVY JONES, EDGE OF WINTER, ENCHANTING, ESMERALDA, FARAWAY PLACES, FORT BRAGG, FORTUNA, GLITZ 'N GLITTER, GLORY STORY, GOOD SHOW, HALO IN ORANGE, HOWDY DO, INCANTATION, KISSING CIRCLE, LATIN HIDEAWAY, MEMPHIS BLUES, PEACH BISQUE, PREMIER EDITION, PROM NIGHT, PURGATORY, ROLE MODEL, and ROMANTIC MOOD

Cultivars receiving one (1) vote (45)

ALMADEN, ANNA GLITSCH, ANN BLOCHER, BODACIOUS, BUTTER CRISP, CALIPH, CRUZIN, CRYSTALYN, DAREDEVIL, EASTER LACE, HOLLYWOOD BLONDE, HOT STREAK, IMPRESSIONIST, INLAND PRINCESS, JOLT, JUNGLE PRINCESS, LACE ARTISTRY, LARRY GAULTER, MAGIC, MEMOIRS, MY VALENTINE, NOBLE HOUSE, OKLAHOMA CRUDE, PACIFIC TIDE, PIECES OF ICE, PINK FROTH, PLAY WITH FIRE, RADIANT ENERGY, ROYAL ELEGANCE, SPICED CUSTARD, SUPERMAN, TIDE MARK, TIME PIECE, TINTED CRYSTAL, VENUS AND MARS, VERISMO, and VISION IN PINK

Cultivars receiving NO (0) votes (64)

AMAZON BRIDE, ARMADA, BEGUINE, BLENHEIM ROYAL, BLUES ON PARADE, BOGOTA, BOHEMIAN, BROCADED GOWN, BUBBLE UP, BUSY BEING BLUE, CHERRY MAID, CHUCKLES, CHURCHILL DOWNS, CIRCUS JEWEL, CRYSTAL DREAM, CYCLES, DEAR DOROTHY, DESIGNING WOMAN, DOROTHY PALMER, ELIZABETH MARRISON, EVENING GOWN, FOXY LADY, FUNFEST, GOLD COUNTRY, HALO IN YELLOW, HEAVEN'S SHORE, INAUGURAL BALL, INDISCREET, JO VALLERY, JOYOUS MELODY, KATY LYNN, KEKIONGA, KUNIKO, LEMON LOVER, LITTLE MUCH, MARY ELLEN NICHOLS, MOUNTAIN VIOLET, NANCY GLAZIER, NEIL DIAMOND, PAGAN PINK, POINT IN TIME, POLAR SEAS, PULSAR, PUNKIN PATCH, RECHERCHE, ROMANTICIST, ROUND TABLE, ROYALIST, SCANDIA DELIGHT, SPICED CIDER, SQUEEZE LOUISE, STRATAGEM, SUCCESS STORY, SUNKIST FRILLS, SUNNY AND WARM, TIMESCAPE, VERACITY, VIBRATIONS, WHO'EE, WINDSONG WEST, WINDWALKER, WINFRED ROSS, WINTER'S WHIMSEY, and WORLD CLASS

Varietal names in **BOLD FACE** type are from Region 4 Hybridizers

DM = Dykes Medal Winner



ALFALFA AND IRIS:

Three Articles Re-Printed from *The Medianite*

Editor's Note: These three articles were sent to me by one of our most progressive-thinking members of Region 4, Rosalie Yerkes Figge. Rosalie reports that she as well as Carol Warner, Joan Roberts, and Clarence Mahan have had good results from using these techniques, so here is an opportunity for all of us to learn.

MIXING ALFALFA AND IRIS ?!?
by Dorothy E. Guild [Spokane, Washington]
The Medianite Vol. 32, #4 (Winter 1991)

A surprise had come with our Region 13 Spring Newsletter when a member wrote that on the advise of a rose grower friend, he had used alfalfa pellets (rabbit feed) on his iris with good results. It can be used as a side dressing or a "tea" to spray on the foliage.

Very shortly I was off to the feed store to buy a bag of alfalfa pellets. The usual commercial fertilizer in Melba Hamblen's 6-10-6 mix had been spread in early April. In May, the pellets went on as a side dressing for one, two and three year old seedlings while a thin layer, as a top dressing, went on all seed rows. As the seedlings erupted through it, they were carefully monitored so as not to be smothered.

Another commercial fertilizer spread went on after bloom. Three weeks later with a sprinkling can "alfalfa tea" went down the rows.

I felt that the iris growth, etc. came sooner from the alfalfa application.

Intrigued by what I had read and was doing, in May, I had written of this to a friend. Shortly thereafter, he read in a garden catalog of alfalfa use by rose growers. Included in the article was a specific analysis reporting the nutrients available in alfalfa. In 1990 he had made up three beds to take transplanted iris. He chose to try an experiment by applying alfalfa to just one of them. By late fall he saw that vigor (side fan development, plant color and growth, very important to a commercial grower and hybridizer) had exceeded that of those not getting the alfalfa treatment.

Of a certainty, every member could weave a tale regarding the '91 weird season just past. Here spring was cold, dry and late. June was one of the coldest on record and by contrast the third wettest in 100 years. Bloom was markedly delayed. Pollen did not ripen when blossoms opened. 1990 bloom time had been wet and cold and I learned that fresh stamens when picked, labeled and taken into the house promptly responded to its heat and "fluffed up", with pollen ready for use with hybridizing going forward. Fewer than two dozen days in July, August and September had temperatures above 89 degrees. Precipitation was practically nil with overhead watering done at least two to four day intervals dependent upon the effects of heat and brisk drying winds. Weatherwise, it looked to be a sad year for iris culture. In the past two years leaf spot had suddenly exploded. With June so cold and wet, I had expected another year of that pest. It didn't happen!

Like my friend, I couldn't help observing how well the iris had done - seeming to exceed the performance of previous years. Because we are long time hybridizers, I feel that our observations and conclusions are valid. Has any one else used alfalfa? If you have, could we please hear from you?

We will continue this practice for three to five years and report back. Question: Were our improved iris conditions attributable to the use of alfalfa? Can alfalfa pellets be a "magic carpet" for better iris culture?

FEEDING IRIS ALFALFA PELLETS

by W. Terry Varner Marietta, Ohio

The Medianite Vol. 33, #2 (Summer 1992)

[The Medianite] Editor's Note: The Winter 1991 issue of The Medianite included an article by Dorothy Guild on the same general subject. This article provides additional information as well as detailing experience in a different climate.

In mid-spring of 1991, upon information received earlier from an iris correspondent, I began using alfalfa pellets as a side dressing fertilizer in my iris beds. I had been informed that definite results were apparent within a few weeks. Through the years, I have tried, whenever possible to use organic methods of cultivation in my iris beds as well as my vegetable gardens. Though I have always used commercial fertilizers on my beds along with gypsum, I have always used compost in my beds. The idea of alfalfa pellets used as a side dressing was highly appealing.

Following bloom season, I used the pellets on the new set seedlings (June) and before too long their value was evident. I had healthier seedlings than ever before. The color was rich, dark green.

In 1990 I redid three large beds in my back yard. These were of identical size. At that time all received a ton of sand to loosen the clay and the same amount of commercial fertilizer (12-12-12), gypsum, and compost. This spring (1991) I did not fertilize the beds. In mid-June, following bloom season, I decided to experiment on these beds since each had been previously reconstructed with equal fertilizer additions. I coated one bed heavily with alfalfa pellets and left the other two beds without alfalfa pellets or commercial fertilizer. By summer's end there was a very noticeable difference in the color, growth and development of the bed receiving the alfalfa pellets. The side rhizomes appeared on the treated beds [sic] two or three weeks before appearing in the untreated beds. My seedlings which had been treated shortly after being transplanted also have tremendous side growth with some having as many as 6-8 side fans by fall.

Excited by what I was experiencing from using the pellets, I began to research their composition. What do alfalfa pellets contain that would be of value in iris beds? The following information is from Nitron Industries Inc., Fayetteville, Arkansas, and might help us to understand.

"Alfalfa has many qualities in the nutrition area, not only for plant use, but for soil organisms as well. One very important ingredient is 'Triacontanol', a powerful plant growth regulator. Orchid and rose growers make an alfalfa tea and spray it directly on as a foliar nutrient.

"Other benefits of alfalfa. Very high in vitamin A, plus Thiamine, Roboflavin [sic], Pantothenic Acid, Niacin, Pyridoxine, Choline, Proline, Bentaine [sic], Folic Acid, plus N-P-K-Ca, Mg and other valuable minerals, also included are the sugars and starches, proteins, fiber, plus co-enzymes and 16 amino acids. How could your soil not respond to such a nutritious meal?

"We recommend a handful per bush or sprinkled lightly down the row. Alfalfa meal or pellets are excellent to add to your compost pile. Make a 'tea' and spray the liquid as foliar feed while adding the remaining wet alfalfa to the soil. Fifty pounds of Alfalfa meal or pellets will feed 1,000-2,000 square feet.

"Alfalfa Tea; Fill a five gallon bucket with water, add 2 pounds of Alfalfa pellets/meal. Let set [sic] over night. The result will be a thick tea. Apply by the cups full. Apply 1-2 cups to roses, 2-4 cups for larger shrubs."

(The Nitron Formula Spring 1991, p. 19)

In my beds, I coated the ground heavily with the pellets. I used them on wet ground so that they would begin to draw moisture and disintegrate. I doubt that you can use them too heavily on iris. They do not burn. An interesting side observation is that I had practically no leaf spot this year. While it was a dry summer, by August we began to have good rains. I watered each week. I will not claim that the pellets reduced the problem of leaf spot, but it was nil this year except in the two untreated beds.

We would welcome information from others who have used alfalfa pellets and can confirm or fail to confirm our experience. If you have not tried using alfalfa pellets why not try them in 1992? We believe that you will like the results. (102 Laramie Road, Marietta, OH 45750.)

[The Medianite] Editor's Comments: Based upon Dorothy Guild's earlier article I am trying alfalfa pellets this spring. Alfalfa pellets are prepared from the foliage of the alfalfa plant. Although they do contain the elements normally present in commercial fertilizer, the concentration of these elements is undoubtedly quite low as compared to their concentration in commercial fertilizer. Thus, it seems to me that their benefits must be substantially due to the other ingredients which they contain, including the vitamins and amino acids as well as trace elements. Many iris growers, myself included, have noted that irises grow more vigorously in "new" ground than in beds which have been used for irises for several years. We may speculate that one major function of the alfalfa pellets is to replace whatever has been lost in the iris beds as the result of prolonged iris "monoculture", which most of us practice since we don't have space available [sic] to permit us to "rotate crops".

COMMENTS ON ALFALFA PELLETS
by Terry Aitken [Vancouver, Washington]
The Medianite Vol. 33, #2 (Summer 1992)

We replant our iris back into the same ground every year, we are careful to add humus each year, as a reconditioner and NEMACUR (a soil insecticide) to control nematodes. The most cost effective (we pay our field help to spread it) product that we have found is Alfalfa pellets which we apply at about one ton per acre (or - one 50 lb. bag per 100 feet of row). It is applied in late August as our shipping season winds down and about two weeks before transplant begins. The fields are stripped and a tractor-tiller grinds everything in (Alfalfa and NEMACUR) in one step. Presto! We are ready to plant back!

We first saw alfalfa used by Elmer Price, a fine iris grower in Tacoma, WA. I think he used a higher concentration than we did and his results were impressive. George Shoop used the "tea" method and also got good results. We have been "Pellet spreaders" for about seven years. We particularly like the idea that it helps plants to get reestablished before the ground cools for winter.

**WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS
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Williamsburg Iris Society

FROM THE EDITOR

Note the RVP's change of telephone area code from (919) to (910). We become more and more a nation of numbers.

The AIS has made a decision regarding its library and archives, they will be sent to Dresden, Tennessee, under a contract to be negotiated by Clarence Mahan. The AIS Board ultimately chose to neither have dealings with any entity of the federal government nor to establish any relationship that might have the appearance of indorsing a commercial venture. There are several points that are key to the future well being of this collection. Any contract should provide for:

- 1) Professional expertise either in the institutional staffing or through the availability of consultants.
- 2) Controlled environments that meet professional standards for media storage.
- 3) Electronic access to at least a complete catalog available to the AIS membership and some kind of loan system for those materials not on line.
- 4) A plan for the development of a detailed inventory; an archival assessment and plan; and a preservation assessment and plan. This plan should include a strategy for financing these activities including both government and private sector funding sources

The Board also rescinded its previous action on the eligibility of foreign hybridized iris to win AIS awards. Clearly the new board hears its members and is responsive.

I was interested to read in *Southern Iris* and in the *REGION 6 NEWSLETTER*, the results the AIS Symposium in Regions 5 & 6. The top ten in Region 5 in the order of popularity are: JESSE'S SONG, VANITY, DUSKY CHALLENGER, TITAN'S GLORY, VICTORIA FALLS, STEPPING OUT, ANN, BEVERLY SILLS, GOING MY WAY, and MARY FRANCES. The same list for Region 6 is: BEVERLY SILLS, DUSKY CHALLENGER, VANITY, STEPPING OUT, GOING MY WAY, EDITH WALFORD, SONG OF NORWAY, LACED COTTON, SILVERADO, AND SUPERSTITION (JESSE'S SONG was number 11). It is interesting to compare these lists with Region 4's preferences.

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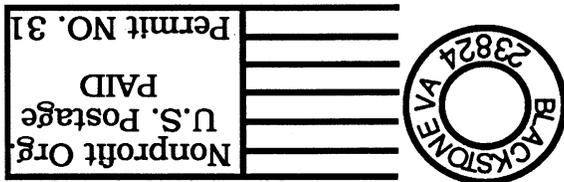
HO! HO! HO!

HO! HO! HO!

HO! HO! HO!

*HAPPY HOLIDAYS - I HOPE EACH OF YOU
RECEIVES THE IRIS OF YOUR FONDEST
DESIRES - HAPPY DAY DREAMING*

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