

Vol. 1, No. 6
Oct. 1963

THE SIBERIAN IRIS



Published

By

The Society For Siberian Irises

October 1963

C O N T E N T S

Volume I, Number 6

October, 1963

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MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

All members of this Society residing in the United States
and Canada shall be members of the American Iris Society.
Dues shall be \$1.00 per year.

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

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Slides: Chairman ----- Mrs. Elizabeth H. Rowe

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

We have some real accomplishments to show for this year, I am happy to say. Foremost, perhaps, is the work of the Committee on Standards for Judging Siberians. Dr. William McGarvey, the Chairman, and his Committee, Mrs. William Chambers and Dr. Currier McEwen, have done a fine job and we hope that we can soon put a copy into each member's hands. Present plans are to issue it free to members, at cost to AIS Judges, and at a small profit to anyone else who is interested. It will be in a format which will be reasonably durable and small enough in size to be used for field and exhibition judging. It will be the source for the Siberian iris course of the AIS Judges' Training Program. I know that when you see and read it you will be as pleased with it, and as proud of our Committee, as I am.

I am sorry to have to report that Irene Van de Water has resigned as Research Committee Chairman. She is leaving - perhaps before you see this - for two years in Afghanistan. We are happy to say that Dr. Sherman Preece will be the Chairman Pro Tem while she is away.

Mrs. Van de Water sent us a pleasant farewell in the form of the article on Siberian Species on page 98. Unfortunately there is not much available other than Dykes' descriptions of these species; the 40-chromosome species in particular have had little attention in this respect (as in others!). We have asked in the past for careful, accurate descriptions of any variety you grow in your gardens; now we would like to reiterate this request with the added note that if you grow any Siberian species a careful description will be especially useful. There appears to be, as Mrs. Van de Water remarks about *I. bulleyana*, considerable variation within most of these species and even some question as to whether some are species or represent hybrid populations. Besides these careful descriptions which could be useful to the Research Committee, we need reports on seedlings of these species, results of self-pollination of species, crosses between species, and second and later generations of line breeding of them. We know just about nothing about the genetic makeup of these species, and only by making many crosses and reporting the results fully and accurately can we hope to learn. This is true of all the Siberians but particularly so of the 40-chromosome group from which we can expect to get the new colors and patterns which will widen the appeal of our iris. Indeed they are already giving Mr. Kitton some very interesting results. I am sure we are all looking forward to the time when he feels they are ready to be named, registered and introduced, and imported into this hemisphere. But there are other species than the ones he is working with which also need to be investigated. If you have any materials to work with won't you sign up with the Research Program?

To descend from these noble ambitions to the facts of my own efforts in this direction: After my fine start last year I did NOTHING this year in the way of describing the varieties I grow; instead I spent most of the spring and part of the summer on a sort of merry-go-round of building trades. Mail piled up, laundry ditto, dust accumulated on the floor and weeds in the garden. I SAW my irises but that was about all. However, I think I know every color of shingle, tint of tile, and pattern of wall-

paper available on Long Island. I didn't even take any slides - my camera chose to go on the fritz at the start of the Siberian season and spent the rest of the time at the repair shop. Persecuted, that's me.

Did you take any slides for our collection? Mrs. Rowe is waiting!

Perhaps it is rushing the season but - Happy New Year and good bloom next spring.

Peg Edwards

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NEW MEMBERS

It is a pleasure to welcome the following to our ever growing membership:

Mrs. Adda E. Ayres, North Spencer Street, Redkey, Indiana
Mr. Albert Ellis, 19 McClure Avenue, Brantford, Ontario, Canada
Mr. Gerald Firth, Spring Bank, Bryant Avenue, Roslyn, New York
Mrs. J. R. Hamblen, 2778 West 5600 South, Roy, Utah
Mrs. R. B. Hargreaves, 3143 West Bellewood, Englewood, Colo.
Mrs. L. J. Holloway, 254 Christine Drive, N. Sacramento 15, Cal.
Mr. Edwin F. Jaeger, 1150 Sherman Ave., Salt Lake City 5, Utah
Pauline Jones, 625 E. Floyd, Englewood, Colorado
Mr. Harry B. Kuesel, 19 Mary Lane, Greenvale, Long Island, N.Y.
Mrs. Lillian M. Leddy, 3124 North 78th, Omaha 34, Nebraska
Mrs. Richard McCabe, 412 Kinsley Street, Sherrill, New York
Mrs. Olin McCormack, 3709 Littlejohn North, Fort Worth, Texas
Mr. Louis R. McDonald, 516 Victoria Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia
Mr. George Melnik, River Road, Deerfield, Massachusetts
Mrs. Herman S. Muck, 904 Ringgold Street, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Mr. William H. Peck, Jr., Yellow Cove Road, Oyster Bay, New York
Mrs. E. R. Philips, P.O. Box 159, Delta, Colorado
Mr. August Phillips, 318 W. Plymouth St., Englewood, Calif.
Mrs. E. L. Raney, Route 4, Box 194, Dallas, Texas
Mrs. Bruce Richardson, Rte #2, Hannon, Ontario, Canada
Mrs. Fred K. Smith, 144 South 39th, Omaha, Nebraska
Mrs. H. O. Wilson, Route 1, Box 125, Bangs, Texas
Mrs. Robert C. Smith, Route 3, Robinson, Illinois
Connecticut Iris Society, % Mrs. Earl Schulz, 38 Antonio Ave.,
Meridan, Connecticut

To all of the above new members, in fact, to all of our members, if the officers can be of any assistance to you please drop us a line. If you wish to be of help - let us know that too! Are you interested in serving on a committee or writing an article for this publication? Comments are always welcome.

* * * * *

DENVER CONVENTION REPORT
Mildred Johnson

Arriving at Denver on Tuesday evening, I found several AISers in the lobby. After freshening up I took my "Crystal Ball" to the lobby and proceeded to introduce myself to all with the introduction, "I'm Mildred Johnson from Salt Lake, and I see a Siberian iris in your future". At that point I showed them the crystal ball in which was a preserved White Swirl blossom. I carried that little ball all over the Convention, introducing myself and White Swirl at the same time. It was quite a conversation piece, believe me. The previous weekend I had it at the Region 12 Convention, at which Bob Carney was present. He teased me there and all through the AIS Convention, but finally admitted they would have a nice planting of them at the 1965 convention in Memphis. I had invitations to the Section meeting printed up and gave them to each group I spoke with, inviting them to come and learn how to dry our iris. This made a big impression on many people who promised to come to the meeting Friday night. I kept this up on the bus trips Wednesday and Thursday; when we arrived at the Garden of the Gods for lunch I found a perfect opportunity to catch all those touring. We had an enormous lineup waiting to be served so I moved down the line, showing White Swirl as I went and inviting all to the Friday meeting. I didn't tour with the busses Friday as my husband invited me on a trip into town for an anniversary celebration. After dinner at Lys Housley's I hurried back to the hotel for the Section meeting.

We had a combined meeting with the other three Sections which worked out nicely - each took about a half hour, and what a crowd! We had more than the room could comfortably hold. There was seating for 150, they were standing and some who came late couldn't get in the door. The Spurias went first, then us, the Medians and Japs. Good ole Slide Chairman, Betty Rowe brought a group of slides, of which we used the choicest, followed by the demonstration of drying - fresh Siberians were generously supplied by Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Hargreaves of Englewood, Colorado. I had a box of dried specimens which I had intended to put into an arrangement but time didn't permit; we ended instead with a five-minute question period. I believe it was a good meeting - we had many compliments that evening and the next day. You can see that it 'took' on at least eleven people as they are now enthusiastic new members.

The Thursday evening Judges Training session was good. They had a panel with someone representing every section except the Siberians. Each speaker had five minutes, and at the conclusion they turned the meeting over to questions. At one point the Chairman said, "Now, are there any more questions or comments?" I popped up and said, "Since you ask for comments, I'd like everyone here to know that Siberians are irises." Everyone applauded.

At any rate, I didn't let an opportunity pass to speak up for Siberians, so I think I Publicity-Chairman'd right well for the Society.

REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE
Sherman Preece, Jr.

In the absence of our Chairman, Irene Van de Water, who is about to leave for Afghanistan, I will attempt to give you a few ideas from one member of the Research Committee.

A new book has recently been published which is of great interest to the plant taxonomist and may be of interest to those working with Siberian irises, especially for the chemically inclined. The book is entitled "Biochemical Systematics" and has been written by two very capable young botanists from the University of Texas, R.E. Alston and B.L. Turner. Prentice Hall is the publisher and 1963 is the date.

This book represents something of an important point in the study of plant classification. There have been many previously published results of studies in the classification of plants using essentially chemical data or chemical data combined with morphological evidence etc., but this book represents the first effort to bring all such information together and to usher in the "Biochemical Period" of systematic biology.

Although this book approaches problems of classification in all organisms, it is oriented toward and is at its best in those aspects dealing with flowering plant taxonomy. Considering the backgrounds of the authors this is only natural, and it is, I think especially enjoyable for those of us interested in plant classification.

While this work contains a systematic account of the details employed in various types of chemical analysis which can be used in problems of classification, there is also a basic underlying story of the rationale behind studies in a Natural Classification which utilize the modern approach. They do emphasize the biochemical approach, but only in relation to the more conventional morphological, evolutionary and cytogenetical methods.

Some aspects covered here might be employed by one of your chemists to further evaluate the relationship between the 40 chromosome species in the series *Sibericae* and the 28 chromosome species. Paper chromatography, serology or some such approach could be used.

Many of us are not chemists and may hesitate to consider such an approach to the study of irises. There are, of course, many other aspects of research which are just as worthwhile and should be not only considered but approached by all of us non-chemists (see TSI Vol. 1, No. 3). I hope many of you have begun work on some aspect of Siberian iris research. It would be of great interest to the Research Committee to receive word from members about their research projects and also their results. This information could be of value to the entire society. How about hearing from you?

NOTES ON SIBERIAN IRISES FROM THE WRITINGS OF DYKES
Irene Van de Water

William Rickatson Dykes (1877-1925) wrote many short articles for various garden publications over a period of about twenty years. After his death these articles were compiled and edited by George Dillistone in 1930 in a book entitled "On Irises".

This book makes excellent reading, the perfect companion for a winter evening by the fireside. Jewels of information sparkle and crackle in the reader's mind. It is both instructive and humbling to come upon ideas which seem new in 1963, but which were offered by Dykes as far back as 1910.

Since this book is not generally available, the following information will bear repetition in some cases verbatim.

Re *Iris sibirica* and *I. orientalis* or *sanguinea*.

I. sibirica is confined to Europe west of the Urals, between which and Lake Baikal there occurs a gap before *I. orientalis* begins in north-east Asia. *I. sibirica* and *I. orientalis* are totally distinct in habit, and what is even more important, have entirely dissimilar seeds and seed-vessels. Both have hollow stems, and narrow almost grassy foliage. Here, however, the likeness ends, for the spathes of *sibirica* are entirely scarious while those of *orientalis* are wholly herbaceous. The capsule of *sibirica* is broad, rounded and inflated, and the seeds large and flattened, while in case of *orientalis* the capsule is much narrower relative to its length, and the seeds are much smaller, with a tendency to be cubica.

I. sibirica itself seems to owe its name to a confusion with *orientalis*, because it appears to be a European species, and it is doubtful whether the true plant is found east of the Urals. It grows wild near the upper part of the Rhine in Switzerland, Hungary and Central Russia. The relatively small blue flowers stand high above the foliage on tall, slender stems, which are nearly twice as long as the leaves. *I. orientalis* has large flowers on shorter stems, which only raise them above the foliage because the tips of the leaves bend over and droop. Of both species there are albina forms, that of *orientalis* being the well-known Snow Queen, which is a purer white than that of the various varieties of *sibirica*, for the latter are more or less tingued or flushed with faint lilac or blue.

Some forms of *orientalis* have their spathe valves heavily flushed with red-purple, which has earned for them the name of *sanguinea*, though these red spathes are by no means a constant character.

Hybridization between these two species produces interesting results, for the deep blue of the wild flowers can be diluted to a sky-blue by crossing with white, and the large flowers of *orientalis* can be obtained on the tall stems of *sibirica*.

Re I. wilsoni

Both *siberica* and *orientalis* have their flowers heavily veined and flushed with deep blue-purple on a white ground, which can, however, be changed to yellow by crossing them with *I. wilsoni*, a yellow-flowered species from western China. The latter is not a very striking plant, for the yellow is pale in the somewhat twisted standards, and often is dotted and flecked with purple on the falls.

Re I. forrestii:

I. forrestii is another species from western China of more slender growth and narrow grassy foliage, but with flowers usually of a far cleaner yellow and of more pleasing shape. In 1914, Dykes writes that *I. forrestii* and *I. wilsoni* were recently collected by the two men after whom they were named.

Re I. chrysographes.

Of this species Dykes writes as follows: "*I. chrysographes* to my mind, is one of the best of many beautiful Chinese plants we owe to Mr. E. H. Wilson. The most richly colored species of the whole group is *chrysographes*, which earned its name, when I first saw it in flower, from the fact that its deep velvety purple falls are veined or streaked with gold over their central area. It comes from western China where there appear to be several other closely-related species or local forms."

Re I. bulleyana.

I. bulleyana was first described as a wild species from the same region as the above-mentioned species, but the variation among its seedlings casts some doubt on its claim to specific rank. It grows about two feet high, with somewhat narrow leaves, and has flowers veined and blotched with blue on a white ground.

Re I. delavayi.

"One of the tallest of the irises that is valuable for its habit of flowering late in June is *I. delavayi*, with long, drooping falls, on the central area of which appear large white blotches amid the surrounding purple. The first introduction of this species brought a form with dark red-purple flowers, but, later on, some seeds, which were, I believe collected by Mr. E. H. Wilson, gave me a whole series of colour forms, ranging from blue-purple, as well as red-purple. A very pretty hybrid can be made by crossing *delavayi* with *forrestii* or *wilsoni*, for the white background of the falls becomes yellow."

Re I. clarkei.

The Himalayan *I. clarkei*, from the neighborhood of Darjeeling and the Chumbi Valley, is distinguished by the upper polished surface of the

foliage and by its solid and not hollow stem. There is also extraordinary variation among the flowers, both in shades of purple color, and in its markings and blotches on the falls. The stem also branches low down and often more than once, so that this species is abundantly distinct from the others in this group.

Re I. prismatica.

This species has now been placed in a group all by itself called Series Prismaticae, but it is interesting to hear what Dykes had to say about it. In 1925 in an article named "Iris Sibirica and Its Allies" he states, 'All come from Europe or Asia, with the single exception of the American I. prismatica, which is very distinct, but which seems, at any rate, more closely allied to the members of the sibirica group than to those of any other section of the genus.' -- 'All except the Himalayan I. clarkei and the American I. prismatica have more or less hollow stems, though in I. chrysographes, the central cavity is nearly filled with pith.'

In Dykes' most famous book, 'The Genus Iris' published in 1912, are to be found excellent color drawings of the following species, which will be of interest to all those who work with Siberian irises; - sibirica, orientalis, wilsoni, forrestii, chrysographes, clarkei, bulleyana and prismatica.

* * * * *

PEGGY'S HELPERS

I got a cat a while ago
Who's full of pep and vim and go;

He likes to chase the leaves and flowers
And chew on them for hours and hours.

But best of all he likes to lunch
On some nice young Siberian bunch.

What whim of fate has ordered that
Our Clancy's a Sibiricat?

- - - - -

How doth the busy little jay
Improve his shining hour
By stealing labels from my beds
To decorate his bower;

And when his Missus talks of lumps
He brings them out once more
But never never puts them back
Where they had been before.

NEW ZEALAND NOTES
Lucy Delaney

Last season was a very wet one in Nelson - 60" of rain instead of our usual 38" - and though it suited the Sibirica family I don't know that they flowered so much better. Though they had their feet in the water they certainly did not have their faces in the sun. Wet weather and the fact that we had our school holidays in midwinter instead of late autumn and early spring wrought chaos in my garden. Some days I had to wait till midday for the frost to thaw before I could do anything and I haven't caught up yet.

I did not keep my promise to do some hybridizing except for one lone cross of Nelson Blue X My Love which produced only one small pod. There were a few self-set pods on Nelson Blue but Moon Moth has never produced a pod of any kind.

I. forrestii settled down and flowered well. I loved its dainty flower and soft yellow coloring. I had some forrestii seedlings given to me which I hope will flower next spring.

Nora Distin and Mandarin Purple (chrysographes) have not performed yet except that Mandarin Purple for two years has had two or three flowers, late in January, down in the leaves where I never see them until too late. It has a glorious blue-purple flower from what I have seen and I intend to shift these two to see what a different position will do.

I sent pieces of Nelson Blue and Moon Moth around New Zealand for testing. The only reports I have back so far are that in Taranak Moon Moth was lovely while in Southland Nelson Blue flowered well.

One white seedling of Wisley White failed to open properly-is this a failing of white seedlings? I seem to have had so many do that. Another just made it, and another was quite a good one very much like a larger Snow Queen. Only one Blue Cape seedling flowered - a mid blue.

From the Mirza Citronella seedlings only one flowered and that was a most unusual color - a light wine red over yellow - very narrow falls; not a scrap like the red seedlings from Eric the Red and from Helen Astor. They are real rosy pinks and reds and their falls are very broad, almost round. Some rather pretty blues among these reds and pinks.

So far I have not been able to get much information on performance of Sibiricas around New Zealand. However, I'm sure the older ones grow so well here that they are taken for granted. Neither can I find out anything definite about shows but will keep trying.

Gwenyth Stevens, our Iris Society Librarian, sent me seed she received from Moscow. One packet is labeled Sibirica L., the other Orientalis Thunb. I have also sown seed I received from England - Perry's Blue, Snow Queen, 'mixed' chrysographes, chrysographes rubellum and chrysographes hybrids. There are quite a number of seedlings to plant out. I hope to get this done in May - our holidays go back to normal this year. Let's hope the weather does too.

My favorites this year were Moon Moth, Nelson Blue, the rose-pink and red seedlings, a navy-blue seedling of Mirza, My Love and chrysographes.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE REPORT 1963
Mildred Johnson, Chairman

Nineteen hundred and sixty three has been a busy year in Sibirica for this irisarian! We hope you've all been plugging, and feel you must be when we see the new memberships coming in. Keep up the good work!

Locally, I've been a busy bee - preserving specimens and taking them to every affair which involves gardeners...not only to the Iris Society functions, regional and local, but to the big Spring Flower Show sponsored by the Utah Associated Garden Clubs as well as other places where flower-lovers congregate. To be appreciated, Siberian irises should be seen. Arrangers, particularly, love this flower as it is a 'natural' for arrangements with distinction. Those of you who can arrange: we implore you to do at least one arrangement with Siberians in season.

I spoke to the Rainbow Iris Society of Ogden, Utah, on Siberians and companion plants. We have three new members from the Ogden region to date and hope for more.

The local newspaper Garden Section is featuring an article of preserving flowers, with my daughter modeling a set of how-to pictures and featuring Siberian irises. They will run a list of best varieties in a spring section.

I placed an article in the New Mexico Iris Society Newsletter and Frank Williams of Region 6 has invited me to do an article for their Newsletter, which will be done as soon as I get an article out of the way on which I am working for publication in the AIS Bulletin.

You may have noticed several mentions of Siberian irises in the article (AIS Bulletin, July 1963) I wrote on my convention doings, and of course, at the convention I drove 'em 'mad" - no one there will soon forget Siberians, I'll betcha!

An invitation is out to everyone who cares to visit my garden - we hope you will all be generous with your plantings and invite people to see your Siberians in bloom.

Future plans include contacting RVP's with articles for placement in Region Bulletins and Newsletters - Region 12 will feature an article in their yearly publication.

Ask not what the Society for Siberian Irises can do for you, etc, etc, etc. Promote, share, and interest others in Siberians - you will feel good for having helped and the Society will prosper with enthusiastic members.

President Bob Carney promised us we'd see an immense planting of Siberians when the Convention goes to Memphis in '65.

By the way, I put in some Siberians this year, did you?

FLOPPY FOLIAGE
Peg Edwards

This is an unfortunate characteristic of many garden varieties of Siberian irises and one which should be firmly bred out of future introductions. Still, few of us want to throw out varieties we like simply because they have this habit. I recently had occasion to talk to a Garden Club about the non-bearded irises - and of course I laid it on heavily about Siberians - and this was one of the problems I was asked about during the question period.

My suggestion was the method I have used for some time with fair success. I pretty well know which are the worst offenders by now, and these I cut back sharply within a couple of weeks after blooming. The new foliage comes up quite rapidly and stays erect or almost so, and I can't see that the vigor of the plant, or the next year's bloom, is diminished. I have tried staking the plant and gathering the foliage loosely into a couple of loops of green raffia or other plant ties which I then fastened high on the stake. But both these methods, I must say, do leave the plant looking somewhat unattractive for at least part of the post-bloom period.

One of the members of the club then told me what she had been doing - she said all her Siberians flopped almost flat out on the ground and she had been at her wits' end to find some way of making them look more attractive. Then she thought of the method used for tidying a daffodil planting and adapted it: she chose five or six long leaves from the inside of the clump and drew each out to the outside of the mass, carried it horizontally around the bunch past where the next emerged and then brought it inside again and tied it to the third leaf where it had been bent over to be brought out in its turn. The bending and tying was done about 12 to 15 inches above ground and the group was thus encircled firmly by its own foliage at about half its height; the self-ties would be less conspicuous than any artificial material, and the tops, which would curve over somewhat despite the tying up, would serve to conceal the ties to some extent. The new growth, she says, is encouraged to come erect and helps to support the whole, as it is firmer and more vigorous than the older leaves.

It is too late for me to try this method this year, but it sounds to me like a possible way of handling the problem and I intend to try it next year. I hope to report on it next fall and perhaps some others will try it too and let us know the results.

I would like to add that in my own experience many varieties will carry themselves nicely erect in some years and fall all over the ground in others; evidently this characteristic is affected at least partially by the weather. I moved most of my Siberians this year so they were cut down in any case, but Caesar's Brother, which I did not move, and which I had left alone as it never flopped before, was all hanging at about 45 degrees by mid-July and might have been even flatter except for being snuggled against a fence, between a rose bush and a large daylily, which combined to support it somewhat. Perhaps heavy watering would prevent flopping in many of these varieties in dry seasons, although I doubt if it would help much with the really determined floppers.

MORE ABOUT ?BULLEYANA
Jean Witt

(If you will look in the Helping Hand Department of the last issue you can catch up on this mystery - Editor)

Sarah Tiffney suggested that the striped thing might be the Siberian variety Grandis. I was given more flowers this spring and compared them with a color picture in an old Austin catalog. They seem quite similar; oddly enough the catalog description of Grandis says 'mulberry' though the picture looks blue. Checklist says blue - I just looked. So I think we can dismiss that one as either Grandis or a seedling of same.

1963 brought a new contender for 'is it a bulleyana?' This one was given to me a couple of years ago by Mary Mize of Bellingham, Washington, to see if I could tell if it is the real thing.

It is a gorgeous thing - pale blue stripings and dottings on a white to ivory ground, with a pale yellow signal. Excellent flaring form, two flowers on a $2\frac{1}{2}$ foot stalk, stem has four bracts or leaves on the way up, one every few inches.

My first thought was that it was an advanced-generation wilsonii hybrid on white ground - this is what it suggests. It has the same color scheme and type of marking as the thing I had from the Mirza Citronella seed, but that was darker blue and had down-hanging falls. (I was lucky enough to bloom a second one of these this spring to replace the one I lost!)

In the Checklist I find Bulleyana Pallida BIL Perry 1930. Are you acquainted with such an item? Light blue would fit Mary's plant, but it is spotted and dotted and by no stretch of the imagination could it be called a blue self. In flaring form it fits the Dykes plate very well but has lighter blue marks and fewer of them. An apparently dark colored Bulleyana with tucked falls is shown in 'The Iris, an Ideal Hardy Perennial', 1947, and it doesn't match that in amount of pattern, either. It is similar to the Dykes plate in pattern but not in form.

The Checklist also gives a Bulleyana carnea, Correvon, 1930. So some? seedlings must have come out reddish. Hybrids with other Siberians are listed.

From a book on the life of George Forrest I have the statement that his herbarium sheets from S.E.Tibet and Yunnan show a plant 'identical with the plant Dykes first received from Mr. A. K. Bulley and named in his honor in 1910'...

Did it vary in the wild, one wonders - that would be rather an extensive range for a hybrid - or did the variation begin in cultivation? Is the 'not coming true from seed' merely because it was grown in the company of its yellow and red relatives and not protected?

Well, next chapter in this intriguing business at a later date.

SIBERIAN IRISES AT INTERNATIONAL PEACE GARDEN
Charlotte Withers

Last fall after the Siberian bloom season the idea of having a display of Siberian irises in some public garden in North Dakota kept "bugging" me. So I sat down and wrote to the head gardener, Mr. Vogels, at the International Peace Garden at Dunseith, North Dakota. This garden is located in the Turtle Mountains and was conceived by Dr. Henry J. Moore of Islington, Ontario, Canada, in 1928. It was not until 1931 that Dr. Moore made a flight over this area. He was immediately taken with the idea of having the garden here.

The Peace Garden is located on the Canal to Canada Highway, at a point on the International Boundary which is almost the exact center between the Atlantic and Pacific, and only 30 miles north of the center of the North American Continent.

The International Peace Garden is rapidly becoming a tourist attraction of the first magnitude with 79,000 visitors from all states and Canadian provinces during the past year. It is a naturally attractive site with rolling contoured land on the United States side and Manitoba Forest Reserve with native timber on the Canadian side. With floral plantings, well-trimmed shrubbery, and expansive native stonework, it is truly a colorful garden spot.

The whole plan of the garden contains lakes, sunken gardens, the Peace Panel, Terrace Panel, along with a Cascade Panel, Memorial Tower, and Reflecting Pool still to be completed. Limited funds hamper the work on the latter three sections. When I took it upon myself to write to Mr. Vogels I did so with some misgivings, wondering if the committee would accept my offering of plants or would turn me down.

After referring my letter to the Chairman of the Planning Committee of the Peace Garden, Mr. W. A. Cumming of Morden, Manitoba, I was informed that one of the Committee members lived in Mandan. Mr. Cumming informed me that we would be given credit for donating the plants in the literature. After a study of the Siberians' growing habits in my garden about a dozen were selected for shipment. In trying to show height, color range and growing habits I chose some varieties on the dwarf side, some medium and some tall. Colors included white, pale blue, deep blue, purple-light and deep, and even a clump of *Pseudacorus* for contrast. Possibly the Siberians chosen are not the ones every member would have chosen but as a starter I feel they are a good selection. Here are some of those sent to the Peace Garden: Helen Astor, Matane, Mrs. Rowe, China Blue, Gatineau, My Love, Royal Herald, Tropic Night, Caesar's Brother, White Swirl, Tunkhannock, Snow Crest, Turquoise Cup, Zest, *Pseudacoris*. In making this selection their growing ability here in my garden had a lot to do with the choice. They had proven their ability to withstand heat and cold, dryness and, to some extent, neglect, and for these reasons I felt they were the ones to be on display. A certain range of color was also considered, with varying shades of blue, purple and white including different types of falls and standards. It is my sincere hope that they will put on such a good performance that more of them will be planted in the brook area of the garden.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR SHIPPING SIBERIANS

Peg Edwards

Some, though by no means all, commercial growers of irises have had poor results in shipping Siberians and perhaps have been discouraged to the extent of dropping them from their catalogues. Others have continued shipping with more losses than they or the purchasers like. I am sure all have tried to prepare for shipping so as to give the plants the best chance for survival, but there are always a few little tricks one doesn't think of until someone else mentions them. So, for the benefit of any commercial growers who have had trouble, and also for those of us who would like to swap a plant or two with friends, here is a summation of suggestions I have picked up from various sources.

First, divisions should be packed as soon after digging as possible. I have found that if I wash all soil from the roots and immediately dust the wet roots with damp powdered peatmoss so that the roots are completely covered, then put each division in its own small plastic bag with a handful of the peatmoss and a tablespoon of water and then tie the bag firmly at the base of the foliage, then trim the foliage to about three inches, the plant will stand as much as two weeks in this packing without serious damage. However, the shorter the time out of the ground the better! The idea is to provide just enough moisture to keep the roots plump and firm without encouraging the growth of molds. Sarah Tiffney suggests that this might be prevented even better by dipping the bare roots in a solution of Captan or some other fungicide or dusting them with the dry powder with a rubber bulb duster; the damp roots could then be dipped in the peat, and I intend to try this hereafter.

After the roots have been packed it is advisable to let the foliage dry off so as to cut down on molds growing on them - perhaps a dusting of fungicide on these would be useful too.

The prepared division should be packed in a sturdy carton, with a few small airholes punched in the sides, just large enough to accommodate them, and allow a little circulation of air around the foliage. Be sure the carton is plainly marked 'Keep from Heat and Cold' - although if the weather is very hot when they are shipped there is not much the Post Office or Express Agency can do about the heat.

Amateurs should bear in mind that if plants are being sent to another state it is advisable to have them inspected by a representative of the sender's State Agricultural Department; if you can arrange to know in advance when he is coming to inspect them, dig and wash them just before he is due - within half a day at the longest. After he has inspected them they can immediately be dipped in the fungicide or dusted with the powder, and then the peat, as suggested above. If, as in some areas, you must bring the plants to the Agricultural Agent's office, make sure there will be someone there who is competent to inspect when you arrive, and dig and wash the plants just before you leave the house. You might bring along your duster and a bag of peat and as each plant is passed give it a quick dust and dip in the peat. If nothing else, it will make a good impression on the inspector! Never use earth in

packing for shipment. It might contain fungi, bacteria or insects that would defeat your care in preparing for shipping and it might infect your friend's garden with ailments he has been spared before.

As for time of shipment, try to get the plants to the recipient at least six weeks before frost can be expected in his area, so as to give the new roots time to work into the soil before cold weather slows their growth. The best time in my experience and that of others I have talked with, is immediately after bloom is finished. On some varieties the new roots begin growing within two weeks after the last petal is fallen; other varieties may not start root growth until mid-July, but if properly packed this can begin even in transit. It is a pity that this is not feasible for most commercial growers, but they can at least begin shipping to their more northerly customers in early August. Anyone shipping Siberians, or for that matter any type of plant! -to someone who may perhaps not be familiar with the type, might do well to enclose with the plants a slip of paper giving brief instructions for planting the divisions. This could be as brief as: "Give sunny well drained position, in soil well fertilized but not limed. Plant as soon as received. Plant to cover the lowest $\frac{1}{2}$ of foliage, mulch lightly with straw, woodchips, or other loose mulch. Water well in spring and summer - these irises need moisture to bloom and increase." Or you could go on for a full page if you want to go into detail.

In short, ship clean plants with moist roots and dry leaves protected against fungus. Good shipping!

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TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance March 15, 1963	\$104.90
Deposits since then	<u>33.50</u>
	\$138.40
Disbursements:	
Printing, Postage 3/63	18.56
Service Charge	<u>.60</u>
	\$19.16
BALANCE October 1, 1963	<u>\$119.24</u>

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DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES

We hate to mention this but some of our members are a little forgetful so we are taking this way to suggest that you bring your membership up to date. If there is a RED figure on your mailing label this issue--will you please put your dues for that year in an envelope and send them to me. If you are paid up--1964 is just around the corner--why not send your 1964 dues NOW and forget about them after the hustle of the Holiday season. We don't want to lose even ONE member for even one issue.

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

Sarah Tiffney, who had previously resigned as our Vice President, and Sidney DuBose, resigned as Chairman for the Siberian Robins of the AIS Robin Program, Dorothy Spofford took over and from all we hear is doing a fine job. She is doubling in brass as our Bulletin Representative and will cull quotations from the Robins both for the Bulletin and for The Siberian Iris whenever anything good turns up that is suitable for the needs of the publication concerned. What is good for us is not necessarily good for Flight Lines, and vice versa.

On subject the Board Robin discussed intensively in its last two rounds was the matter of bee-pollinated seed. The decision of the Board is that we go on record as being in favor of controlled crosses and opposed to the introduction of plants of unknown parentage. This does not mean that if at some time in the past you sowed some bee-seed and you know have, or find in future bloom, something really superior, you must hide it away in the back of the garden or throw it on the compost heap; any seedling that is really distinctive should be registered and introduced. But think very carefully about it, grow it for several years and get the verdict of several judges before doing so. Of course this is equally true of new seedlings from controlled crosses! It is true that we do not have the impressive number of varieties to choose from that some types of irises have available for the gardener, but we will not improve the situation by introducing irises that are no real improvement over what is available. The important thing about using only controlled crosses in future is that only by knowing the parentage of new varieties can we begin to gather the knowledge of their genetic makeup which will enable us to breed for specific objectives.

Those of you who are old hands at iris breeding, and early members of AIS, will perhaps remember that the great burst of enthusiasm for the Tall Bearded followed quickly after the leading hybridizers began to make it a matter of policy to name the parents of their new introductions - to make their pedigrees available to other interested breeders; one great consequence of this attitude was that growers could begin to tell what desirable characteristic was most apt to be found in offspring of a particular parent, and by combining the right parents or grandparents they could produce the seedlings they wanted (to a considerable extent - there is still something to be learned!). This of course, led to larger flowers, better branching, clearer patterns, and even new colors. By following the same procedure we too can produce superior Siberians. Of course, if you merely want to grow a few plants from seed for your own amusement, go to it. If you are inexperienced in growing Siberians from seed, a few practice pods of bee seed might be to your advantage. But please, in future, for the good of the Society, for the improvement of our favorite iris, and for the benefit of your own work in breeding them, try to avoid the temptation to pick those bee pods. Control yourself and control your crosses.

You will perhaps have noticed that the name of our Society is slightly altered. We are now the Society for Siberian Irises. To be honest I don't like it myself; I have been calling them iris as long as I have known they existed and those 's'es in a bunch do not come trippingly from my tongue - in fact I feel like an ill-tempered snake - but it is AIS policy, it seems, to use the form of the plural and we agreed that as a Section we should follow the example of the parent organization. A good many of you have been using it right along; for those like me who have not done so I can only suggest the remedy I'm using: say it ten times over, three times a day (or three times over, ten times).

We have been giving some consideration to the matter of Display Gardens. A number of our members have permitted their gardens to be listed each spring as available for visiting and possibly these can form a nucleus for a system of official D.G.s through the United States and Canada. However, some planning will be needed before we can do anything officially. I mention this because I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has ideas to offer on how they can be managed most efficiently and to the best advantage of all concerned; if you would like to work on the committee to set them up I will be entranced to have volunteers.

Dr. McGarvey suggests that members who are judges suggest to the chairmen of Iris Shows in their areas that classes for Siberians be included in show schedules. This is a very good idea. It might be extended by their suggesting that a class of arrangements using Siberians would add a bit more glamour to the show - and they might even offer some cut Siberians for the arrangers. Bill also suggests that when the material on Standards of Judging Siberians and the Judges' Training Program based on it have become available our Judges might work on the local Chairmen to set up a class on Siberians for the local judges.

Charlotte Withers reports (see report elsewhere in this issue) that she has made arrangements to have a display of Siberian Irises at the International Peace Garden which lies on the boundary between Canada and North Dakota.

Members who have some experience in growing Siberians are urged to write articles for their regional or local society publications on growing Siberians in their area - different climates do require different techniques - and offer them to such publications. Don't be afraid that your work won't be well written - the Editor can make what changes are necessary, that's his job - but do ask that, if he does edit your article, he let you look over the finished copy for possible misinterpretation of what you had written so that it can be changed before it goes to press. Believe me, most Editors are delighted to GET articles. We rarely have enough on hand for the next issue, when publication date begins peeking in the front door(hint).

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HELPING HAND DEPARTMENT
OR
What Can we do For YOU?

From: Peg Edwards--"I have had several requests for information about what is described as a 'Median in Siberian iris'. Height seems to vary from about 10 to 12 inches; a small white Siberian called 'Montaine or Montane, nobody seems to know how to spell it' and everyone seems to admire it. No such Siberian is in the Check Lists as far as I can find. When I first heard of it I suggested that it might be Miss Preston's Matane, which is a white Siberian from Snow Queen x Sibirica maxima, as no height is indicated in the Check List. This notion is reinforced by Albert Ellis' remark that there is a similar one, a seedling, one of Miss Preston's that she produced when she was in Ottawa. Can anyone supply a description of Matane - particularly its height or other information to help solve the problem of whether this is Matane or a similar seedling that somehow latched onto the name with a slight variation or is something entirely separate that was named by its originator for his own use but never registered?

(Re above question--I have Matane in my garden and it is a very charming variety. The foliage is about 12-15 inches with flowers on stalks about $2\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches above it. Blooms are white with a delightful ruffling. They seem to stand weather well and hold well also in arrangements. It is one of my 'pets'. Compact and neat in the flower beds. Foliage is still erect and clean looking which is a feature to be admired. Does this answer some of the questions? C. Withers)

From Hazel Grapes--"No one has written that they have Gersdorff's Skyblue Waters. How about it--do you?"

From Connie Nesbit, Norcross, Georgia, on trip to Canada--"seen so many Siberians of various shades. Our season is long past so this has been an added pleasure. Our southern judges had a great thrill seeing my Siberians." (Thanks Connie, glad you brought the Siberians to the attention of the Judges.)

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S L I D E S

Did you get time to take some slides for our Slide Committee this summer? If so, and you can spare a few, drop a line to our Slide Chairman, Mrs. Betty Rowe, telling her which ones you have. Be sure to check with her before you send slides to avoid duplication.

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