

Fall 1927

Editor's Copy

THE SIBERIAN IRIS



The Siberian Iris

Fall 1977

Volume 4, Number 6

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'Dues due' notice appears on the back cover with the address; in some cases where dues have been paid this happens because of the unavoidable time gap in spreading the news may be disregarded.

Dues are: Single Annual, \$2, Triennial, \$5; Family Annual, \$2.50; Triennial, \$6. Membership is open to members of AIS in Canada and the United States, and to Iris enthusiasts elsewhere.

For information about back issues, and prices of other publications, check the last two pages of the previous issue.

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The President's Page

Julius Wadekamper

This has been a year of gains and losses. We have lost our good friend and Director, Ira Wood. We have gained another Siberian auction, this one in the Midwest. More about both of these appears later in this issue.

Ira's passing leaves another vacancy in the Board of Directors and two Committee Chairmanships, as he had accepted the tasks of Auctions Chairman and Publicity Chairman. If anyone is interested in serving on either of these Committees I would be happy to hear from them. The Board of Directors is working on a Board replacement to serve until the next elections.

Two auctions were held this year for the benefit of the Society for Siberian Irises and the Society for Japanese Irises, jointly. The Mid-America Auction held at my place, and inspired by the Eastern Seaboard Auction, was chaired by Pat McCallam. Our thanks to her for her fine work in promoting this highly successful sale and auction of Siberian Irises. Not only do these auctions help distribute Siberian irises but they raise necessary funds for the Society to meet the cost of publications on Siberian irises. It is our sincere hope that more auctions of this nature will be started in the Central States, the Southeast, the Northwest and the California area.

The Siberian Irises were beautiful in several convention gardens this spring. They are becoming more popular all the time and as irisarians and non irisarian gardeners learn of their good landscape and gardening qualities they will become more popular still.

May you have many happy hours this winter gloating over your new Siberian acquisitions!

Julius

1977 AWARDS:

Morgan Award: VI LUIHN (DuBose) 86 votes.

Runners-up: SILVER EDGE (McEwen), 36 votes; EWEN (McEwen), 26 votes; WING ON WING (McGarvey) 26 votes.

Honorable Mention:

ROANOKE'S CHOICE (McGarvey) 63; ILLINI PEACE (Varner) 50; BLUE ROSETTE (Puett) 32; LETITIA (Varner) 29; BEE (McEwen) 23; DARK CIRCLE (McEwen) 22; SUNLIGHT BAY (Reid) 21; SHOW-DOWN (Varner) 16; LITTLE BLUE (McEwen) 13; REJOICE ALWAYS (Varner) 11; DEAR DELIGHT (McEwen) 10; FOND REVELATION (Reinhardt) 10; LOIS J. (Cook) 10.

NEWS FROM GREAT BRITAIN
Jennifer Hewitt

Since the Siberian, Spuria and Japanese Iris Group of BIS was started in June 1976 it has not had an easy time and nothing very much has been possible apart from keeping it in being. Losing our mainspring when only three months old was a great blow, but we are hoping that Alex Back's wish to see a flourishing Group devoted to our particular interests will not be long in becoming a reality. The support and encouragement we have received from the specialist Societies in America has done a lot to cheer us and we are grateful for it; our parent Society, BIS, has also given us help in many ways without which our problems would have been much greater.

A Group meeting was held on June 14, 1977 to coincide with the BIS Late Show and though only a few members could be present, letters of support and offers of help had been received from others. The Chairmanship has been taken over by Max Davis who I am sure will give us effective leadership. Doris Hansford has offered to continue as Hon. Secretary/Treasurer and Mr. E. Elliott will look after the Seed Exchange; Jennifer Hewitt will act as Hon. Librarian and also duplicate the Group Newsletter which, it was decided, would now be of greater benefit to us than using the BIS Newsletter. But our thanks are due to BIS for allowing us to use the Newsletter for the past year which has been extremely helpful. A possible Editor for the Group Newsletter has been approached, and the permission we have been given to reproduce articles appearing in "The Siberian Iris" is much appreciated.

Further detailed plans for Group activities will, it is hoped, be made before long and we feel sure that our future is a bright one. We have about 20 members in Britain and overseas and thanks to generous donations are in a good financial position. The past 12 months we have been 'marking time' but now we have a sound basis from which to take off. In particular we hope to encourage more breeding of good British varieties--CAMBRIDGE should not remain the only Siberian iris to receive the Dykes Medal!

Now for some comments on Siberians seen at the BIS Show and at the RHS Garden, Wisley. Gardeners everywhere take a keen interest in the weather and we in Britain are no exception--in fact we are often accused of being obsessive about it! But this report might seem inconsistent if I don't say a little about the conditions which have affected our plants. The 1976 record drought was very hard on them, but we have just had the wettest winter for a number of years and this has done much to restore the plants to good health. Unfortunately the weather doesn't know when to stop and we are now having a wet spring and summer and a late season. However this has meant that a number of exhibitors had Siberians in flower at the time of the Show, though not always of the highest standards. The main class for Siberians calls for 6 spikes

in 3 varieties and no first prize was awarded. Second prize went to Ray Jeffs who had SEA SHADOWS whose flowers were past their best or in bud, CAMBRIDGE which had some good blooms, and an unknown variety rather similar to COOL SPRING which was in good condition. This was the only entry in this class but in the next, which needed 3 spikes in one or more varieties, was well supported. Mrs. Goodwin won with WHITE SWIRL. CAMBRIDGE and LIMEHEART, all in beautiful condition. Second was Mr. Worth with varieties less familiar to us--SPARKLING ROSE', SHOWDOWN and DEWFUL, and Mr. Mason was third with three spikes of WISLEY WHITE. Other entries came from Mrs. Blanco-White, whose flowers had not come out and were unnamed, and Mrs. and Miss Butcher all of whose spikes were very tall--Miss Butcher had three spikes of CAESAR and Mrs. Butcher showed three seedlings in which I felt the flowers were too small for the length of stem but the colors were rich blue and purple and one had two branches.

Several forms and hybrids of I. sibirica were shown on the display of the Species Group and I especially noticed a white one with falls slightly tinged with blue, which I was told might have been collected in the wild in Russia but this could not be confirmed. I. chrysographes appeared in the display as did I. delavayi. A form of I. chrysographes without the gold markings was part of an exhibit which won the first prize for a collection of species for Ray Jeffs, and in the second prize exhibit was I. sanguinea but with no flowers open. A number of named varieties were used by competitors in the flower arrangement classes, very effectively.

Probably all the blooms at the Show had had the advantage of being under cover the previous night, when prolonged thunder storms swept the London area, and when I visited the RHS Garden at Wisley on June 15 and went to the Sibiricae Trial Beds, the damage done by rain and wind was very noticeable, among both the British- and American-bred varieties. On the sandy soil, the 1976 drought affected the plants badly when I saw them a year ago but this time nearly all the plants were a rich healthy green and making good clumps. Among those sent by Dr. McEwen, ORVILLE FAY and SILVER EDGE were outstandingly vigorous and had plenty of bloom which was weather-resistant; FOURFOLD WHITE matched them for vigor but the blooms had suffered more. BLUE BURGEE, DEAR DELIGHT, SALLY KERLIN, RUFFLED VELVET and LITTLE WHITE were growing well and had a good show of flowers. The 'reds' EWEN and POLLY DODGE were finding life harder and had made smaller clumps with few blooms. Tomas Tamberg's lovely deep blue SETT 59, planted in 1976, had one good clump with 4 spikes, a small plant with one spike, and another even smaller without bloom. Both the late Alex Back's varieties, VALOA and sdlg. V1, were doing well as were the older British-raised varieties which have been there for a number of years. Unfortunately Doris Hansford's I. bulleyana hybrids do not like the conditions though SPLASH DOWN was an

exception, growing and blooming well, and the yellow CHARM OF FINCHES is doing fairly well, as is ROB, but GOLDEN ORIOLE has disappeared.

(In an accompanying note Jennifer mentions that 'summer has only arrived now and then..with very wet weather between.... That'll teach us to get into a panic about water supplies and appoint a Minister for Drought!' But hang on to him, Jennifer--you always discover that it's just what you got rid of that you need.)

SIBERIAN IRISES AT MEMPHIS Julius Wadekamper

Ever since Dr. McGarvey publicized the fact that Siberians often are self-pollinated even before the blossoms open and that emasculation is necessary to ensure a controlled cross, we have been seeing some exciting results in the Siberian Section.

At the National Meeting in Memphis Dr. McGarvey talked about pink breeding in Siberians. From the looks of some of his slides and of irises growing in the gardens we can expect that we will soon have clear true pink Siberian irises. Dr. McEwen talked about yellow 28-chr. Siberians and silver-edged Siberians. His seedlings also illustrated the fact that good clean yellows already exist as well as irises with definite border trim.

The seedlings shown at the AIS Convention indicate some great new plants coming up in the future. Ben Hager brought in a display of excellent new seedlings. SB 57 was a velvety wine red, very ruffled. It had neat white markings across the shaft. SB 60, marked for 1978 introduction, had smaller light blue flowers with gold haft markings. The branching was very good. SB 45 was a wide creamy white with very wide standards and a yellow center. SB 54 had three branches. The standards were smaller and bluish with lighter colored style arms; the hafts were marked silvery-green. DuBose SB 50 was a very large blue-violet self with lighter style arms. It had standards which were wide and held at 45 degrees from the vertical. No haft coloring, three branches.

A very fine seedling was Louise Bellagamba's 275. The very wide falls were a new shade of red which attracted the eye from across the garden. The short wide standards were held firm. This seems to be one of the reddest Siberians I have seen.

The named Siberians were also putting on a good show. ILLINI CHARM, a light violet with white and yellow on the falls was very attractive. Forrest McCord's big blue GRAND JUNCTION was spectacular and ROANOKE'S CHOICE gave evidence of the pink trend of McGarvey's work. PEG EDWARDS in the Millar garden put on a fine display with its good light blue flowers. Varner's TEALWOOD continues to attract me anew every time I see it; the rich velvety color is different. The big blue spreading DREAMING SPIRES of Brummitt has upright standards. The different forms of Siberians

were further demonstrated by Hager's beautiful SPARKLING ROSE' which has elegant narrow upright standards. It is a deeper shade of pink with an airy look.

McGarvey's AUGURY tends toward pink. While very nice in form the color needs some cleaning up and as a garden plant I do not feel it merits the price asked. SAVOIR FAIRE, a clean blue, was excellent, and Mrs. Knock's DARK MARINE had clear blue upright standards and white on the hafts.

A FOLLOW-UP--FIVE YEARS AFTER

In the Spring Issue of 1972 there appeared a pair of letters about some Siberians that were planted along Rt. 495 in Massachusetts. Recently one of our readers sent me a note about the current state of this planting as of late last year. Here is the gist of what she wrote:

The planting consisted of 1200 small plants--270 PERRY'S B BLUE, 300 SNOWY EGRET, 450 TYCOON, and 180 of a plant named as Orientalis, but whether these were the species I. sanguinea or one of the named clones, is not indicated. These were planted in five plots on the high sides of cut slopes away from the salt and carbon monoxide fumes of the roadbed.

No sooner were the irises planted than people parked on the breakdown lane and shoveled some out for their own gardens! This problem had not been foreseen, but it was soon brought under control by signs being posted that read '\$500 fine and 5 months in jail for theft' plus frequent patrolling by state and local police.

We (a local group) were interested in using Siberians in a similar roadside project, so I checked the outcome of this one on Rt. 495 with the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Works. Mr. R. T. Tierney replied: "In four years there has been no great evidence of increased plants. Bed 3 is overgrown with weeds and is in poor condition. However, the other beds are in excellent condition which does encourage us to plant more Siberians."

For anyone driving through this part of Mass. in Siberian season Mr. Tierney gave the locations as follows:

- Bed 1, southbound roadway, .9 mile south of the Mass. Pike, on left, 250 plants.
- Bed 2, same, 1.3 miles south on right, 225 plants.
- Bed 3, northbound roadway, .8 mile north of the Milford-Hopkinton town line, on left, 250 plants.
- Bed 4, same 2.7 miles north on left, 250 plants.
- Bed 5, same, 3.6 miles north on right, 225 plants.

(2¢ worth -I wonder if any of them have seeded?)

ROBIN NOTES

Irene Van de Water (Oregon): When we got home from San Francisco, three Siberians from McEwen were awaiting me. A friend had put them in peat moss in a large milk carton, and they looked good and happy when I got them. We planted them June 2 (1976) under a Siberian elm, and put tall collars of milk cartons around each. They are 40-chr. PUGET POLKA, BLUE FORTY, and 167/164-5, an induced chimera, 40-40 or 40-80. He wants me to grow them in the native, untreated soil which is over 7.5 pH, to find out if the 40s can take it.... There is only one Siberian out, DEWFUL, and its cup is so pronounced you can't miss it.... How do you account for the number of buds on ILLINI ENCORE? What is its parentage?

Carl and LaRue Boswell (California): VI LUIHN is a lovely flower, cobalt violet, and unbelievable branching; its sister SAVOIR FAIRE is almost royal violet, has good shape but little branching. STARSTEPS is a cutie, intermediate in size, wide petals, white with yellow hafts, well-shaped flowers. One highlight of the 1976 season was the Region 14 Seedling Show--the winner was a lovely violet Siberian grown by Mary Dunn of Sacramento, a cross of ANIVERSARY X TEALWOOD.

Robert M. Turley (Louisiana) I have been wondering if Siberian seed needed cold treatment before they would germinate. Six to eight hours does not sound necessary. The soaking in cold water overnight more than likely does more to increase germination.

Steve Varner (Illinois): My 1150, a wine red, was putting on a good display in the Copeland garden (1976) and received the most votes for HC. I have registered it as WINE WINGS and plan to introduce it in 1977. V610 had quite a bit of pink in it this year as first bloom--longlasting flowers and branched stems with four buds. My hand-pollinated LITTLE WHITE pods often are just chaff...ORVILLE FAY, in Copeland's garden, was the best I've ever seen it; I expect that clump garnered the votes necessary for the Morgan. I bought it this fall.... Concerning the mottled or marbled Siberians--some say 'dappled' is more appropriate--I have shown them and had much interest. Only one person, so far, has registered dislike. The marbling is in a rounded pattern, as compared to the streaks I remember in Japanese irises...ILLINI ENCORE is (TEALWOOD x SNOWCREST) X (TEALWOOD x TEALWOOD)- the 1 pod parent, an unnamed seedling, well branched but with insignificant, washed-out color and floppy form...I grow VIOLET REPEAT and barely keep it alive. It has never remonted for me. I do have V209 which remonts regularly for me--in June and July but not in fall. If first blooms before the TBs, at about 28". This year the June stalks were 10" higher. It looked odd to see full green pods on the low stalks and blooms on the taller stems...STARSTEPS did impress me with its branching on a low stem and with small white flowers...One has to use imagination with the present 'pink' Siberians, but I believe they will come...I would suppose that

soaking longer--even washing in slowly moving, continuously moving water--would do most to improve germination. If seeds dry out, soaking is very important. I also freeze and thaw them a few times.

SIBERIANS SOUTH

Robert M. Turley, Ball-Pineville, Louisiana.

I'm 29 and a horticulturist by profession. I'm presently employed with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service as an Assistant County Agent in Horticulture, in Rapides Parish (that means County here).

My wife, Sandra, and I moved to our present home more than a year ago and have begun to plant our yard. I grew a few Siberian irises when I was in high school, but college interrupted my gardening, and with college and apartment living for ten years, I have not been able to collect many plants. We now have a home and a yard in which to do some of the things we would like to do.

Our Siberian season is in April. I am amazed at how vigorous the Siberians are. I bought a few last year with two or three fans. Now they are in clumps about 12" broad. I have had people ask me if Siberians receive enough cold to perform well in Louisiana. We receive plenty of cold weather; it can be rather drastic in fact. We can have 80 F. weather in the winter, then a cold front moves down across the Texas Panhandle into Louisiana and drops the temperature into the 20s. Our low this past winter (75-76) was 17 F. In through the central Louisiana area you can grow apples and oranges side by side. All Siberians go dormant here. Our rainfall averages 52" a year.

At present, the Siberians I grow are: BLUE MOON, ERIC THE RED, FAIRY DAWN, LLEWELLYN, MOONSPRITE, PERRY'S BLUE, ROYAL HERALD, SNOW CREST, TOWANDA REDFLARE, TUNKHANNOCK, WHITE SWIRL, and CAESAR'S BROTHER. These are older varieties, but are still effective in clumps. I never had any problems growing any of these varieties; Siberians, so far, have done quite well for me.

I did a little bit of hybridizing and the Siberians set seeds fairly easily. I have some selfed seedlings to line out this fall, just to get into the swing of things. I cannot imagine them being worth much. One of my interests is to hybridize for reblooming Siberians.

(2¢ worth: It is interesting to hear from the deep south that Siberians can be grown there. The selfed seedlings might turn up a few pleasant surprises for Bob, too--I don't know of anyone, for instance, who has played with FAIRY DAWN in the last 20 years and he might try crossing that onto WHITE SWIRL with some interesting results. Sounds like the batch I started with! Peg)

(1¢ worth: I have. FAIRY DAWN X LIGHTS OF PARIS bloomed this year; FAIRY DAWN X WHITE SWIRL should bloom next. Carol)

OBITUARY

Ira E. Wood

Ira Wood, a Director of this Society, died July 30, 1977. He is survived by his wife Betty. Everyone who met him will miss him, and everyone who ever corresponded with him will also feel that a friend is gone.

He served the American Iris Society in many ways, including three terms on the AIS Board of Directors, and was a recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal of AIS.

I wish we could quote in full the touching remembrance of Sandy that Betty wrote to send to his friends, but some of it I must share with you:

'He was born in Redlands, Cal. His father died when he was ten, the oldest of three children. (After high school) he completed the five year sequence for the B. S. and E. E. degrees in four years. In 1929 (asked to work for Bell Telephone Labs) the recruiter said he could come east by any route he chose, at company expense, and he chose to come by boat, via the Panama Canal.

'His work at Bell Labs was in circuit design. The day the Key West-Havana underwater cable was in service, a call came to him from Havana to tell him that the repeaters (amplifiers) he had helped to design were carrying the voice to him. During the war he worked on circuitry for gun directors and guided missiles and spent quite a bit of time at White Sands where the missiles were tested. He never liked the thought of working on weapons and was anxious to get back to telephone work.

'About that time we were introduced by a friend and in May of 1947 we were married. When we rented an apartment in Summit (N. J.) a small iris garden was associated with it. We got a book on irises so as to know how to care for this garden, learned about hybridizing, and thus began a hobby which was to become a major part of our lives.

'We soon outgrew the garden space beside the apartment. We bought an acre of land, transplanted the irises, and built a house. We attended every convention of AIS from 1954 to 1977. Sandy enjoyed these conventions greatly. In the spring of 1967 he decided to retire, about a year ahead of the mandatory date, so as to be able to have more time that summer in the iris garden.

'In June of 1975 he had a malignant growth removed from the colon...In May of 1976 a liver scan showed a growth in the liver--inoperable cancer...He knew he was in for a hard time. What did he do? He went home and mowed the lawn. "Business as usual" was the way he wanted it, as long as he was able to keep going. His quiet sense of humor never left him. When we were

having trouble with our radio, he quipped "it's getting worse every day, just like me." During his last week his dearly loved sister Louise was with me, caring for him at home.

'On the morning of July 30th he quietly stopped breathing.'

He was just a little short of his 74th birthday.

ESTHER C. MCGARVEY

Esther McGarvey, wife of Dr. William G. McGarvey, died April 19, 1977. They had recently returned from a winter in Florida and she was looking forward to spring and summer in their garden.

Esther was a medical technician and had trained under Dr. Thomas Cope at Germantown and Chestnut Hill Hospitals in the Philadelphia (Pa.) area. She was interested in the arts and in gardening, and after she married Bill in 1931 she lured him away from the pheasants he was working with in genetic research, to plants, and gave him helpful criticisms in the selection of the best seedlings and in the choice of parents for his crosses. She rejoiced with him when he was given the Hybridizer's Medal of the American Iris Society--which he said was as much her honor as his.

I never met Esther at an iris affair that I didn't realize again her grace and elegance, and appreciate anew her wit. We all will miss her.

MARIE ZARLING

Mrs. Zarling, who with her husband were the printers for The Siberian Iris, died only a couple of days after she called me to say the spring issue was ready for me to pick up. She was always helpful with advice about anything that might improve the format of our publication and could not have been more interested if it had been a 'learned publication' or a potential best seller I brought to her every spring and fall. Though she never had the time free to be active in any plant society or garden club, she was very fond of gardening, and we often dawdled after the business matters were taken care of, to talk about her plants and mine, our gardens, my plant lamps and her new garden room--which was only completed about a year ago. The waiting room of the print shop was garlanded with houseplants, and so was the one before her desk--I teased her a few times about getting the vines in her typewriter--and we swapped plants and cuttings on various occasions. She had been growing irises long before I brought her my first print job in 1955--an Iris Show schedule--and when I came in with the first issue of TSI that was printed by Airland Press she told me how delighted she was, as she dearly loved the

Siberians. If we have an attractive publication, much of the credit should be given to Marie Zarling and her husband Hank.

I'm going to miss her.

REGISTRATIONS 1976

BEE (McEwen 1976) Sdlg. T472/162(2). SIB (2 x 28chr.), 27" (69 cm), M, DVBlvb/DVB8W. S. dark violet-blue (RHS 89B) and velvety; F. same, white edge of blaze shows under styles which are light violet-blue. T369/58: (ORVILLE FAY x (BLUE BRILLIANT x unknown)) X unknown. McEwen 1976.

*BLUE ROSETTE (C. Puett 1974) I. Puett 1976.

BLUE SNIPPET (McEwen 1976) Sdlg. 71/89(2). SIB. 10" (25cm), M, FVB7DVB/FVB7DVB8W. Violet-blue (RHS 89D) with veins of 89C and pure white blaze on F.; styles 89D with midribs 89C. LITTLE WHITE X 67-43 (15).

DARK CIRCLE (McEwen 1976) Sdlg. T267/5D. SIB (2 x 28 chr.), 27" (68 cm), M, FVv-b/DV. S. ruffled violet (RHS 88A); F. dark violet (between 88a and 86A); violet-blue styles. (WHITE SWIRL x ERIC THE RED) X (BLUE MOON x unknown). McEwen 1976.

*FOND REVELATION (M. Reinhardt 1974) I. Reinhardt's Iris 1976

*ILLINI PEACE (D. S. Varner 1975) I. Illini Iris 1976

LITTLE BLUE (McEwen 1976) Sdlg. 71/89(12). SIB 18" (46 cm), M, LVb-dv/Lv7DV8W. S. violet-blue (RHS 88D); F. lighter (88C) with veins of 88A, white blaze; violet-blue styles. LITTLE WHITE X 67/43(15). McEwen 1976.

LITTLE RED (K. Vaughn 1976) Sdlg. CWR-1. SIB, 18" (46 cm), M-L, DRV/DRV8W. Dark red-violet self with small white blaze; ruffled. (CLARET x (Wiswell 1912: RED EMPEROR x unknown)) X Tiffney 58-11: ((TYCOON x ERIC THE RED) x unknown).

LYDIA WINTER (W. McGarvey, 1976) Sdlg. 72-68-16. Lt 11 Amoena #1. SIB, 39" (99 cm), M-L, W/V. S. white; F. open pink but convert to violet. (68-64-316 inRoy x 63-2-2-2-P2) X 68-64-315 inRoy Super-40 x Well br-#1).

MAGGIE SMITH (W. McGarvey 1976) Sdlg. 72-68-16 Lt-11 #1. SIB. 36" (91 cm), M-L, LV/LV. Opens pink but changes to light violet. (68-64-316 inRoy x 63-2-2-2-P2) X (68-64-315 inRoy Super-40 x Well br-#1).

ONG'S HAT (I. Wood 1976) Sdlg. 70-67A. SIB, 36" (91 cm), M, W/W9FY Warm white self; full yellow hafts. WHITE SWIRL X unknown.

OUTSET (McEwen 1976) Sdlg. T472/168Z. SIB (2 x 28 chr.), 30", E & Re., DV/DVB7W. S. dark violet (between RHS 88A and 86A); f. dark violet-blue (89A) with gold-white streaking at upper half; dark violet styles with violet-blue midribs. T369/13: ((CAESAR'S BROTHER x unknown) x (EARLY BLUEBIRD x SUMMER SKY))X unknown.

*ROANOKE'S CHOICE (W. McGarvey 1975) Old Brook 1976.

*SHOWDOWN (D. S. Varner 1975). Illini Iris 1976.

STEVE VARNER (H. Briscoe 1976) Sdlg. 70 53B. SIB, 29" (74 cm), M, PRVb/PRV7PBV. S. lavender; f. same, veined lavender-blue; bright blue style arms; ruffled F. WHITE SWIRL X BARBARA'S CHOICE. EC 1975

VALDA (A. Back, 1976) Sdlg. W.2. SIB, 32" (81 cm), E. S. royal blue (Victorian violet RHS 73B); F. deep royal blue with yellow and black blaze ending with intense white fan-shaped marking at edge of blaze. WHITE SWIRL X TYCOON. SC (BIS) 1976

WELCOME RETURN (McEwen 1976) Sdlg. T172/131(10). SIB (2 x 28 chr.) E & Re., PR/PR8Y-W. Ruffled violet-blue (RHS 89D) self with yellow blaze edged white; self stylearms. 68/78(RJ6): ((GATINEAU x lavender sdlg.) x WHITE MAGNIFICENCE) X MY LOVE.

WINE WINGS (D. S. Varner 1976) Sdlg. 1150. SIB, 32" (81 cm); EML, LVR/VR. S. light violet-red; F. violet-red. Sensenbach #6 X ILLINI ENCORE. HC 1976.

YANKEE DOODLE BOY (W. McGarvey 1976) Sdlg. 73-70-20 Nellie B-#1. SIB, 34" (86 cm), VL, LV6W/LVB9DVB. S. light violet-blue shading to white at edges; F. very dark violet-blue at haft shading to light violet-blue at edges; white stylearms. 68-64-20-WS Nellie B-2 X 70 Swirl 63-3-2-W-2.

And that's it for this year. WHITE SWIRL is still a leading ancestor; ERIC THE RED and TYCOON appear twice, as does LITTLE WHITE. GATINEAU only appears by name once but it is involved in several of the numbered seedlings, as can be learned by looking up older registrations with the same seedling number (in the Check List, of course, still \$2.75 (advertisement)) and I find it interesting to see how many Siberians of the early days are still being used. The truth is that many of them have not been explored to any great extent and their potentials are still pretty much unknown. Someone just starting to hybridize Siberians and without any definite goal might find it worth while to try crossing a couple of these--for starters I offer FAIRY DAWN and SUMMER SKY--and selfing each, repeating this for three or four years, as well as selfing or crossing the more interesting of the seedlings. I suspect that some interesting lines of breeding might result, and once characters have been fixed, outcrosses can restore lost good qualities. Who'd like to try it?

NEW ENGLAND BEARDLESS AUCTION

The annual Beardless Iris Auction of AIS Region 1 was held on August 28th. As in previous years the Warburtons were hosts at their home in Westborough, Mass.

Bee was everywhere doing what was needed, ably abetted in the kitchen by Ethel Shepherd who, in Bee's words, is a 'one member task force.' The group of over thirty faithful auction fans from Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey gathered at ten-thirty for a slide program given by Currier McEwen. Everyone was especially appreciative that Betty Wood and Bill McGarvey came.

The slide program theme this year was species and wide-cross hybrids. Slides were shown of examples of I. sibirica and I. sanguinea collected in the wild and sent by Dr. Rodionenko from the U.S.S.R. and of other Siberians collected in Germany and Hungary. The sanguineas were readily distinguished from the sibiricas by their wider falls and lack of branching. The sibiricas sent from the U. S. S. R. varied considerably in height and color but all had relatively small white areas at the hafts in contrast to the large white markings and tall standards from Germany and Hungary. Among the wide-cross hybrids were the late Donald Patton's lovely brownish HOLDEN CLOUGH which he believed to be from I. chrysographes X I. pseudacorus and another which he thought was from I. versicolor X I. pseudacorus. The versicolor experts in the audience had doubts about that one as they did also about a possible I. sibirica X I. setosa hybrid of Eckard Berlin's. There was much interest in slides of Eckard's tetraploid I. forestii, I. setosa, I. versicolor, and I. pseudacorus. In all of these the increased substance was shown by their flaring form but the flowers did not appear to be larger than those of diploids. The slide presentation continued with examples of some new McEwen seedlings. Noteworthy were some pale blue and white diploids from DEAR DELIGHT and some dark, velvety ones from TEALWOOD X RUFFLED VIOLET. Among tetraploids shown there were some from SILVER EDGE with richer blue color, a greenish white induced tetra seedling from LIMEHEART X WING ON WING and some velvety reds with green at the hafts. The morning session ended with slides of some McEwen 1977 tetraploid Japanese irises.

Lunch has become a major feature of the auction. This year the home-cooked dishes prepared by the ladies were better than ever if that is possible. The fact that Frank Warburton had to be away had led to a gnawing fear that his corn might be missing, too. But not so; his and Bee's granddaughter, Micki Marshak, rose gallantly to the occasion and gathered and cooked it to perfect

tenderness.

Although hot, the weather was perfect for the auction held in the shade of an apple tree. Currier McEwen acted as auctioneer, and Barbara Whitehouse and her daughter, Wendy Shaw, kept the records of the sales. As always the bidding was brisk and not an item went unsold. An exact statement of receipts will appear in the annual report of the Treasurer. Here let it be noted that well over \$600 was taken in. After deducting a modest percentage for Region 1 to cover some expenses, close to \$400 was raised for SSI and \$200 for the Society for Japanese Irises. And so another auction in this successful series has been held to the benefit of the societies and to the enjoyment of those who attended.

NORTH CENTRAL AUCTION

We don't at time of writing have a final report on the first non-New England Auction, held at Julius Wadekamper's place, but on Sept. 15 he wrote, sending the picture below and adding that the 'take' at that point was \$1281.75 "and will go higher; we are selling more at our Banquet and at the Regional Meeting. About \$200 was for Japanese irises." The auction was held Sept. 11. The picture is of, l. to r.: Bill McCallum, Mary Duvall, Pat McCallum, auction chairman, and Julius Wadekamper holding boxes of some of the Siberians auctioned off.



THE BACKGROUND OF THE BIG WINNERS
Peg Edwards

On page 53 of the Siberian Iris Check List are given the winners of the major awards for Siberians. It occurred to me one hot day this summer, when I wanted something to do that was cool shady work, that it might be interesting to check out their backgrounds as far as possible. The farthest back I could get was, in the case of this year's Morgan Award Winner, great-great-grandparents. In some cases we can go back to plants collected from the wild in the 19th century; others are 'orphans' with no parentage given. The latter are marked below as (p.u.). One parentage is given as 'probably'; you can check up on the listing for CAESAR'S BROTHER to see that it is a guess and no more. First, let's look at the ancestries as filled out from the list.

British Dykes Medal 1972--CAMBRIDGE: WHITE SWIRL (p.u.) X GATINEAU (Sibirica Maxima x SNOW QUEEN)
Morgan Awards--1951--TYCOON (pu)
1952--ERIC THE RED: HELEN ASTOR (pu) X sdlg.
1953--CAESAR'S BROTHER: probably NIGRESCENS X BLUE KING
1954--TROPIC NIGHT: CAESAR (NIGRESCENS X BLUE KING) X ?
1962--WHITE SWIRL (pu)
1963--SNOWCREST: EMPEROR X SNOW QUEEN
1964--TEALWOOD: CAESAR'S BROTHER (prob. NIGRESCENS X BLUE KING) X self.
1965--VIOLET FLARE (pu)
1966--COOL SPRING (pu)
1967--BLUE BRILLIANT (pu)
1968--PIROUETTE (pu)
1969--VELVET NIGHT (pu)
1970--DEWFUL: WHITE SWIRL (pu) X sdlg. (GATINEAU (Sibirica Maxima x SNOW QUEEN) x CAESAR'S BROTHER (prob. NIGRESCENS x BLUE KING))
1971--SUPER EGO: WHITE SWIRL (pu) X McGarvey sdlg.
1972--EGO--same as DEWFUL
1973--SWANK: WHITE SWIRL (pu) X BLUECAPE ((GATINEAU (Sibirica Maxima x SNOW QUEEN) x ?)
1974--GRAND JUNCTION: TUNKHANNOCK (pu) X TYCOON (pu)
1975--HALCYON SEAS: GRAND JUNCTION (TUNKHANNOCK (pu) x TYCOON (pu)) X TYCOON (pu)
1976--ORVILLE FAY (tetraploid): sdlg.: (VIOLET FLARE (pu) x ?) X sdlg.: (PIROUETTE (pu) x ?)
1977--VI LUIHN: TUNKHANNOCK 9(pu) X SWANK: (WHITE SWIRL (pu) x BLUECAPE (GATINEAU (Sibirica Maxima x SNOW QUEEN) x ?))
I hope I got all those parentheses right!

What do all these add up to? By a long way, WHITE SWIRL is in the lead for most used; besides being a Morgan Winner itself it was a parent to 5 winners and a grandparent to another. TUNKHANNOCK and TYCOON tie for second--parents twice and grandparents once of winners. TYCOON might be given a slight edge because it

won the Morgan itself. Nothing else has 'parented' more than one winner. But when we go into earlier generations, GATINEAU has been the grandparent of three and great-grandparent of another; NIGRESCENS and BLUE KING have been grandparents of one each and perhaps joint parents of one winner, grandparents of two and great-grandparents of two more. Of course these were the great CAESAR'S BROTHER and its winning descendants; CAESAR'S BROTHER was introduced to early to win the Morgan. As a 'total' ancestor it is just short of tying with WHITE SWIRL with four winning descendants against W. S.'s six. But SNOW QUEEN does tie WHITE SWIRL--once a parent, once a grandparent, three times a great-grandparent, and great-greatgrandparent of VI LUIHN for a total of six. Sibirica Maxima does almost as well, with five winners descended from it.

Does this give anyone any ideas? I don't know whether SNOW QUEEN and Sibirica Maxima are still available; their offspring GATINEAU certainly is, and so is CAESAR'S BROTHER. So, for that matter, is NIGRESCENS (or was very recently.) How about crossing WHITE SWIRL X NIGRESCENS and GATINEAU X CAESAR'S BROTHER, and then crossing the best of their offspring? And WHITE SWIRL X GATINEAU and NIGRESCENS X CAESAR'S BROTHER?--again crossing the best seedlings. And don't forget that there are many fine Siberians with these in their ancestry that haven't won awards (at least, not yet) which could be bred into these crosses.

Some of the older varieties, including several of the award winners listed here, have never been really well investigated. I believe Maurice Kitton did investigate ERIC THE RED and its parent, HELEN ASTOR, and found that they just kept repeating themselves; but outcrossed to some of the newer reds they might reward the breeder with interesting offspring. Try them with, perhaps: ROYAL ENSIGN (if you can't buy it, maybe you can beg it from someone who has it?) RUBY WINE, SPARKLING ROSE', CLARET, POLLY DODGE, PINK HAZE.

What are the odds on getting a winner? Generally speaking, if you breed from winners you stand a considerably better chance of hitting the jackpot than if you just use whatever is handy. But when you are dealing with varieties that perhaps have only been used half a dozen times in 20-30-40- years in existence, you may by chance pick a pair of parents that would turn out to be real dark horses. The odds are against you most of the time--but you can cut them by picking the parents. The best parents are most apt to give the best offspring.

A COMMENT ON CAMBRIDGE

Herm Story, of Freehold, N. Y., reported last winter too late for the spring issue that he had had rebloom on CAMBRIDGE, first, two weeks after normal bloom, then on very short stalks on Labor Day. He has promised to watch to see if it happens again but it would be helpful if anyone else noticed similar behavior.

INTERNATIONAL ROBIN EXTRACTS

My only rebloom this year was on a plant of ERIC THE RED just received in Spring of 1976. ERIC THE RED, which is said to be difficult, grew quite lustily on dry sand in an extra dry and hot year! One never knows what they will do.--Marlene Anlburg, West Germany. (Robin Editor's note: How ture! One doesn't expect newly planted Siberians to bloom the first year and doesn't expect rebloom on even the best remontant/Siberians until the plants are established a year or two.)

There are still two Siberians in bloom at this date--July 13th--I. delavayi with its huge rhizome and 5 foot height, and I. wilsonii also nearly 5 feet tall. Also three rebloomers: BLUE RIDGE, SILVERTIP, and ZEST.-- Lorene Reid, Oregon.

At the Iris show in London we held the first meeting of the Siberian, Spuria and Japanese Iris Group of the BIS.. This is Alex Back's achievement, the result of a lot of hard work on his part.--Jennifer Hewitt, England. (Robin Editor's note: The death of Alex Back in August 1976 following an automobile accident is a sad loss to the iris world. The new group is only one of his many services in advancing irises.)

For the first time I have registered and introduced a group of twelve of my irises. There are eight Siberians among them.-- Tomas Tamberg, West Germany.

My best tetraploid from 40-chr. Siberians so far came from I. delavayi seeds. A wonderful blue with white signals and of nearly flaring form. Most work this year was with my tetra-pseud-acorus. I have harvested over 1000 seedpods, with from one to 40 seeds each.

Here in Germany experiments have indicated that Benlate (Benomyl) severely damages many micro-organisms in the soil. It is suggested that perhaps some new or resistant fungi may come if Benlate is used too freely on the soil, and hence it should be used sparingly.--Eckard Berlin, West Germany.

I am keeping careful record this year (1976) of early bloomers. The first, on May 19th, was an I. sanguinea collected in the wild in the USSR and sent to me by George Rodionenko. Next day OUTSET and LAVENDER LIGHT bloomed and then an I. sibirica collected in Poland followed a day or two apart by a pink tetraploid amoena from LAVENDER LIGHT, YANKEE TRADER, and EARLY BLUE-BIRD.

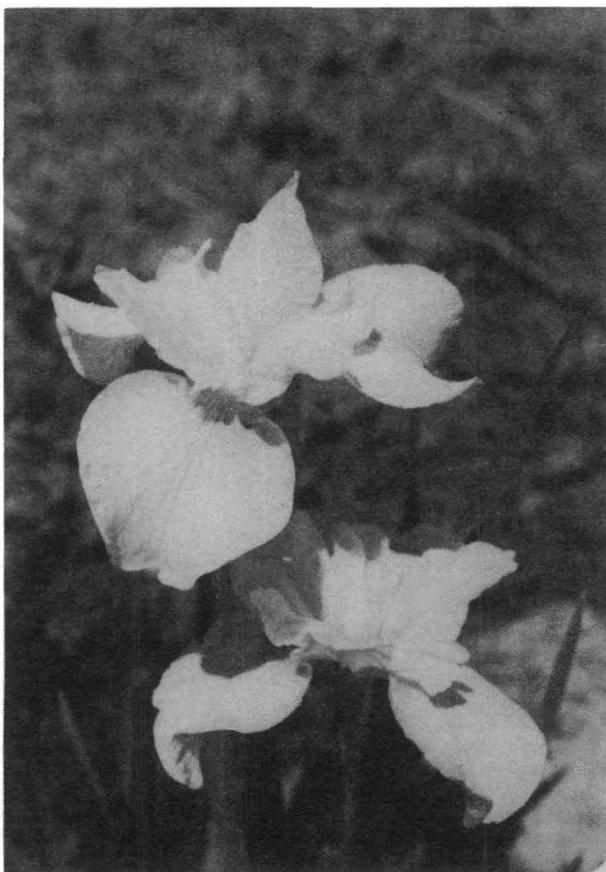
You asked about albinos from Kitton yellow 40-chr. Siberians. This year I germinated about 60 seeds from plants from some mixed seed Maurice Kitton sent me years ago. About half were albinos, so that netetic trait certainly is in some of his yellow ones.

I am now using hay instead of black plastic to control weeds

and soil moisture, Both have been equally good for these two purposes but unless a lot of time is taken to cover the edges of the plastic our high winds get under it and cause havoc. Also when the beds are redug, as my seedling beds are every three years, the hay is beginning to rot and can be rototilled into the soil whereas, of course, the old plastic is just wasted.--Currier McEwen, Maine.

WING ON WING
a very good
shot sent us
by Tony Ballard
Benson, Utah.

We hope to have
an article by
Tony in the
near future on
growing Siberians
in Utah.



MEMBERSHIP LIST AS OF SEPT. 1, 1977

Allen, Ann D., 12335 Orchard Rd., Minnetonka, Minn. 55343
 Bahret, Mrs. Leona, 16 Germantown Rd., Danbury, Conn. 06810
 Bailey, Ardeth J., 202 Caroline Dr., Carter Lake, Iowa (Omaha,
 Nebr. 68110)
 Ballard, Mr. Tony L., Rt. 1, Box 103, Smithfield, Utah 84335
 Barnes, Mrs. Clifford, 1806 NE 73rd St., Seattle, Wash. 98115
 Bausch, Mrs. Melvin, 11530 Laguna De., Mequon, Wisc. 53092
 Bellagamba, Mrs. Louise, 11431 Old St. Charles Rd., Bridgeton,
 Mo. 63044
 Berger, Mr. Cliff, Jr., R.R. 6, Plymouth, Ill. 46563
 Berman, Mr./Mrs. Milton, 5 Crow Hill Drive, Fairport, N. Y. 14450
 Bochinski, Mr. Thomas A., Jr., 114 Fulton St., Boonton, N. J.
 07005
 Boon, Mrs. Evelyn N., 2761 Millbrook Rd., Birmingham, Ala. 35243
 Boswell, Mr. & Mrs. Carl H., 1821 Gross La., Concord, Cal. 94519
 Bourne, Mrs. Francis F., 1363 Swigert Rd., Barberton, Ohio 44203
 Branstetter, Mrs. Ann, Rt. 1 Box 215, Laurel, Mont. 59044
 Briscoe, Mr. Harley E., Rt. 1, Whitehall, Ill. 62092
 Bunker, Mrs. Walter E., 4721 Bencroft St., San Diego, Cal. 92116
 Burrell, Mr. & Mrs. Charles E., 5120 Haverfield Rd., Dayton, Ohio
 45432
 Canadian Iris Society/Mr. Frank A Garrity, 152 W. 18th St., Ham-
 iltion, Ont. L9C 4G5, Canada
 Garlock, Mr. Walter, 3039 Colfax Abe. South, Minneapolis, Minn.
 55408
 Garnell, Mr. & Mrs. Samuel M. Jr., 333 Madison St., Fairborn
 Ohio 45924
 Carr, Mr. Franklin E., 27 Mary St., Bordentown, N. J. 08505
 Chambers, Mrs. Wm. E., 282 Forrest Rd., Merion Sta., Pa. 19066
 Chenoweth, Mr. & Mrs. J. H., 7606 Central Ave., Lemon Grove,
 Cal. 92045
 Childers, Mrs. W. G., Bowles Rt. Box 215, Hamlin, W. Va. 25523
 Clayton, Mr. Ronald D., 1102 N. Galena Ave., Dixon, Ill. 61021
 Cook, Mrs. Verna C., 6924 Pacific Hwy E., Tacoma, Wash. 98424
 Coombs, Mrs. Frank H., R. D. 1, Canasaraga, N. Y. 14822
 Cooper, Mrs. Mark, 212 W. Country Rd. C, St. Paul, Minn. 55113
 Corlew, Mr. & Mrs. Glenn F., 2988 Cherry Lane, Walnut Creek, Cal.
 94596
 Cosgrove, Dr. Clarke (Pres. AIS) Rt. 4 Box 365, Escondido, Cal.
 92025
 Cover, Mrs. Maxine, Rt. 6, Grand Ave., Billings, Mont. 59102
 Coward, Mr. & Mrs. Jim D., 515 West Park, Waxahatchie, Tex. 75165
 Cramer, Mrs. Yetta, 9376 Claircrest Dr., Beverly Hills, Cal.
 90210
 Crockett, Mr. & Mrs. Bob, 2005 Bird, Joplin, Mo. 64801
 Cronin, Mr. Aurthur B., P.O. Box 431, 10921 Oakwood Rd., Roscommon,
 Mich. 49653
 Davidson, Mr. Leroy, 911 Western Ave. #200, Seattle, Wash.
 98104
 Davis, Miss Mary C., 1201 S. E. Leach, Des Moines, Iowa 50315

DeGroat, Mr. Albert F., 12 High St., Brockport, N. Y. 14420
 Diamond, Pauline V. and Samuel J., ZEN-TOV Gardens, 2700
 Quentin Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. 55416
 Dunn, Mr. & Mrs. Robert L., 4828 Jella Way, N. Highlands,
 Cal. 95660
 Eddy, Sylvia M., 5200 Angling Dr., Kalamazoo, Mich. 49008
 Edinger, Mr. Philip, P. O. Box 637, Cloverdale, Cal. 95425
 Edson, Mrs. Violet H., 1 Buttonwood La., Warren, N. J. 07060
 Edwards, Mrs. H. L., 235 Koehl St., Massapequa Park, N. Y.
 11762
 Englerth Gardens--Mrs. Lawrence D. Englerth, 2461 22nd. St., Rt.
 2, Hopkins, Mich. 49328
 Fanning, Mrs. Lester, Rt. 4, 216 Nale Dr., Madison, Ala. 35758
 Flaherty, Mr. Robert R., 24 N. 313 McHenry, Lake Zurich, Ill.
 60047
 Fondoble, Mr. & Mrs. C. L., Rt. 1 Box 242, Washburn, Mo. 65772
 Foreman, Mr. James J., 1360 W. Michail Rd., Tipp City, Ohio
 45371
 Foster, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas W. F., 4041 Manzanita, Irving, Cal.
 92714
 Fowler, Mrs. Bayford, 1619 E. Buckley, Brownsfield, Tex. 79316
 Gaddis, Mrs. Anne M., 601 S. Eighth St., Stanton, Nebr. 68779
 Golladay, Mr. & Mrs. W. V., 18015 E. Lone Oak Rd., Sanger, Cal.
 93657
 Grant, Mr. Ford L., 2125 Sturdevant St., Davenport, Iowa 52804
 Grapes, Miss Hazel, Big Springs, Neb. 69122
 Gullickson, Mr. Ralph, 1710 Lindig St., St. Paul, Minn. 55113
 Hafely, Mrs. Lillian H., 564 E. Judson Ave., Youngstown, Ohio
 44502
 Hager, Ben R., Melrose Gardens, 309 Best Rd. South, Stockton,
 Cal. 95206
 Hamilton, Mrs. Milton E., Box 509, Beverley Farms, Mass. 01920
 Harder, Larry, Librarian, AIS, Ponca, Nebr. 68770
 Harper, Mr. Samuel J., RFD 2, Alfred, Maine 04002
 Harrington, Phyllis, P. O. Box 222, Parsons, Kans. 67357
 Harris, Mr. Morgan, 59 Lee Ave., Toronto, M4E 2P1, Can.
 Harvey, Dr. John Jr., 203 W. Pembrey Dr., Wilmington, Del.
 19803
 Hayes, Mrs. Evelyn, 611 S. Lemoore Rd., Lemoore, Cal. 93245
 Houseward, Mr. B. J., Jr., 122 Mawhinney Ave., Hawthorne, N. J.
 07506
 Huddleston, Mrs. James B., 410 S. Shadowbend, Friendswood, Tex.
 77546
 Hughes, Mrs. Everett, 1068 Mattews Ave., Jackson, Miss. 39209
 Hujsak, Mrs. Karol L., 3227 S. Fulton, Tulsa, Okla. 74135
 Innerst, Mr. Sterling U., 2700A Oakland Rd., Dover, Pa. 17315
 Jacobson, Dorothy L., 3882 S. 82nd E. Ave, Tulsa, Okla. 74145
 Jahnke, Mr. Frederick C., W65 N. 727 St. John Ave., Cedarburg,
 Wisc. 53012
 Johnson, Mrs. Merrill S., 2275 Kensington Ave., Salt Lake City,
 Utah 84108

Kalkhoven, Mrs. Mary E., 17660 S. W. Oak St., Beaverton, Ore.
 97005
 Katz, Mrs. Charles, 601 Clinton, Marshall, Mich. 49068
 Keeney, Mr. Bruce, RD1, River Rd., Port Plain, N. Y. 13339
 Kelly, Mrs. K. R., 1600 S. Genesee Ridge Rd., Golden, Colo.
 80401
 Kennedy, Mrs. Grady, 9610 Todd Hill Rd., Huntsville, Ala. 35803
 Kingwood Center, P. O. Box 966, Mansfield, Ohio 44901
 Knehans, Mr. Gerard Jr., R. Rt. 6, Plymouth, Ind. 46563
 Koza, Dr. Donald, 1171 E. Idaho Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55106
 Larson, Mrs. Lucile E., 700 Pine Heights Rd., Wayne, Neb. 68787
 Lofton, Leona Glee, 3279 S. Franklin St., Englewood, Colo. 80110
 Luhn, Mrs. Walter, 523 Cherry Way, Hayward, Cal. 94541
 Maas, Mrs. Gladys, 1005 S. 5th St., Norfolk, Neb. 68701
 Marshall, Mr. Harold, R. Rt. 1, Loomis, Neb. 68958
 Martindale, Mrs. Evangeline, Rt. 4, Sioux Falls, S. Dakota 57107
 McCallum, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. G., 2611 Southlawn Dr., St. Paul, Minn.
 55109
 McCarne, Mrs. Frank., 1027 Quinn St., Jackson, Miss. 39202
 McCord, Mr. Forrest, 208 N. Cook Rd., Muncie, Ind. 47303
 McEwen, Dr. & Mrs. Currier, South Harpswell, Me. 04079
 McMartin, Mrs. Betty Lou, 4116 Westridge, Oklahoma City, Okla.
 73122
 Merchant, Mrs. Lee, 3140 Douglas Dr. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55422
 Merrill, Mr. & Mrs. Orrin E., RFD 1, Epsom, N. H. 03234
 Messer, Miss Ruth, 750 Joliet St., West Chicago, Ill. 60185
 Metcalf, Mr. H. N., Montana State U. Dept of Plant and Soil Science,
 Bozeman, Mont. 59715
 Miller, Mrs. Ronald, 6065 N. 16th St., Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007
 Mt. Diablo Iris Soc., 1821 Gross Lane, Concord, Cal. 94519
 Ney, Mrs. Lavone R., 2517 S. Brisbane Ave., Milwaukee, Wisc.
 53207
 Noe, Dr. & Mrs. Norman, Mallard Dr., Martinsville, N. J. 08836
 Nunn, Mrs. Stayton, 6135 Sugar Hill Dr., Houston, Tex. 77057
 Nydegger, Mr. Lee F., 244 W. 23rd St., N. Y. C., N. Y. 10011
 Parker, Mr. Herbert M., 2030 Harris Ave., Richland, Wash. 99352
 Pascoe, Mr. Scott M., Rt. 1 Box 461, Lakebay, Wash. 98349
 Peltier, Mrs. Jack G., 2 Bluejay Dr., Wyomissing, Penna 17313
 Perrett, Mrs. France, 255 Humboldt St., Willitz, Cal. 95490
 Poston, Mr. & Mrs. William, 3212 Peach Tree Court, Bakersfield,
 Cal. 93301
 Preece, Dr. Sherman J. Jr., Dept of Botany, 3329 Darrell Lane,
 U. of Mont., Missoula, Mont. 59801
 Prestage, Mr. Lewis, 1700 Cottonwood Rd., Bakersfield, Cal.
 93307
 Puett, Mr. & Mrs. Donald, 2305 Cleveland Ave., Baxter Springs,
 Kans. 66713
 Ray, Mrs. Albert, Rt. 1, Box 74, Mabton, Wash. 98935
 Reid, Mrs. Lorena M., 41886 McKenzie Hwy., Springfield, Ore.
 97477
 Reider, Mrs. John H., 4919 Wall Bank, Downers Grove, Ill., 60515

Reinhardt, Mrs. Robert M., 14151 W. National Ave., New Berlin,
Wisc. 53151

Repp, Mrs. Victor, 2868 Southern Rd., Richfield, Ohio, 44286

Rice, Dr. or Mrs. A. W., 2817 Avenham Ave. S. W., Roanoke, Va.
24014

Richards, Mr. & Mrs. Richard, Box 433, Mt. Baldy, Cal. 91759

Rigg, Mr. Henry V., 3987 Brittany Circle, Bridgeton, Mo. 63044

Ritchie, Ms. Jayne, 1713 Camas N. E., Renton, Wash. 98055

Roberson, Mrs. H. B., Rt. 1 Box 37, Chula, Ga. 31733

Roberts, Mr. Sanford, 15011 Oak Creek Rd., El Cajon, Cal. 92021

Robinson, Rita Alice, 3816 N. Linda, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73112

Rockwell, Mr. & Mrs. C. C. Jr., P. O. Box 70, Fentress, Tex.
78622

Rodosky, Mr. George, P. O. Box 724, Kinsman, Ill. 60437

Ross, Mr. & Mrs. D. T., 2080 Escarpa Dr., Los Angeles, Cal.
90041

Rowlan, Mr. Henry C., 12 Foxbury Dr., Little Rock, Ark. 72209

Library, Royal Botanical Gardens, P. O. Box 399, Hamilton, Ont.
L8N, 3H8, Canada

Rudolph, Mr. & Mrs. Nathan H., 405 Lakelawn Blvd., Aurora, Ill.
60506

Savage, Mr. Robert, 33 Ona Lane, Newburgh, N. Y. 12550

Scharff, Mr. Jake H., 4818 Normandy Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38117

Scheele, Dr. Raymond, 645 Caledonia Rd., Dix Hills, N. Y. 11746

Schreiner, Mr. Robert, 3625 Quinaby Rd. NE, Salem, Ore. 97303

Seeden, Mr. Jim D., Taiga Toft, Rt. 2 Box 141A, Rogers Minn.
55374

Segesseman, Mrs. Ernest, 380 Crescent Dr., Franklin Lakes, N. J.
07417

Seidl, Mr. Wm. J., 732 S. 19th St., Manitowoc, Wisc. 54220

Seymour, Mr. Patrick, Dir., The University of Alberta, Devonian
Botanic Garden, Rm. B-510, Biological Sciences Center,
Edmonton, Alta. T6G 2E1, Canada

Sheperd, Mr. & Mrs. James H., 7 Steven Rd., Box 429, Westbor-
ough, Mass. 01581

Shute, Mrs. Carol, P. O. Box 68, Gilmanton, N. H. 03237

Sidney B. Mitchell I. S. c/o Clara Mangin, 1131 Seminary Ave.,
Oakland, Cal. 84621

Simpson, Mrs. Thomas W., 200 Ridgemade Rd., Baltimore, Md. 21210

Skinner, Capt. & Mrs. Otis R. Jr., Box 902, Yorktown, Tex. 78164

Sloan, Mr. Richard J., 2716 Wintrop Ave., Arcadia, Cal. 91006

Smith, Mr. Robert R., 2119 Parker St., Berkeley, Cal. 94704

Stadler, Mr. Pete, 940 W. Madison, Pontiac, Ill. 61764

Standard, Mr. Martin, 1531 E. 7th St., Hopkinsville, Ky. 42240

Stark, Mr. Gunther, Norwalk, Iowa 50211

Straw, Mrs. Ophelia F., RD 1 Box 89, Clark's Valley Rd., Dauphin,
Pa. 17018

Swinford, Mr. Ross, R. D. 9 Box 316, Anderson, Ind. 46011

Tarr, Mrs. Helen W., 820 Riedy Rd., Lisle, Ill. 60532

Terrill, Mrs. Joseph E., Rt. 1, Burlingame, Kans. 66413

Thoolen, Mrs. Sven I., 255 Manzanita Dr., Orinda, Cal. 94563

Tiffney, Mrs. Wesley, 220 Edge Hill Rd., Sharon, Mass. 02067
 Tucker, Mr. James S., 1424 S. Perrine, Rt. 2, P. O. Box 230, Centralia, Ill. 62801
 Van de Water, Mr. & Mrs. Carleton, P. O. Box 8, Mitchell, Ore. 97750
 Van Doren, Mr. A. Reading, 17 Ingleside Rd., Stamford, Conn. 06903
 Varner, Dwight Steve; Illini Iris, R. R. 1, N. State St. Rd., Monticello, Ill. 61856
 Vaughn, Mr. Kevin C., 2017 . Athol Rd., Athol, Mass. 01331
 Vincent, Marian A., Rt. 1, Box 460, Bonneau, S. C. 29431
 Vinton, Mrs. Gloria L., 3248 Wayne Ave., Granite City, Ill. 62040
 Vogt, Mr. Adolph J., 5101 Fegenbush Lane, Louisville, Ky. 40218
 Wadekamper, Mr. Julius, 10078 154th Ave., Elk River, Minn. 55330
 Wais, Miss Mary, Rt. 2, Box 49, Lebanon, N. J. 08833
 Waite, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth M., 6 Tow Path Rd., Westfield, Mass. 01085
 Warburton, Mrs. F. W., 2 Warburton La., Westborough, Mass 01581
 Watts, Mr. George, 133 King St., Armonk, N. Y. 10504
 Welch, Mr. Leland M., 1003 Newton Court, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49008
 Westmeyer, Mrs. Troy R., 60 Gary Rd., Stamford, Conn. 06903
 Whitehouse, Mrs. Barbara B., 158 W. Bacon St., Plainville, Mass. 02762
 Whitfield, Mrs. Hettie, 1610 41st St., Lubbock, Tex. 79412
 Wilder, Mrs. A. D., 2219 Mathews SE, Huntsville, Ala. 35801
 Wilkins, Mrs. Robert F. Sr., 7536 Maupun Rd., Oshkosh, Wisc. 54901
 Williamson, Mr. Bryce, P. O. Box 972, Campbell, Cal. 95008
 Willott, Mr. & Mrs. Anthony, 26231 Shaker Blvd., Beachwood, Ohio 44122
 Winkler, Dr. V. L., 670 Pine St., Deerfield, Ill. 60015
 Withers, Mrs. John, 218 Jay St., Twin Palms Park, Lakeland, Fla. 33801
 Witt, Mrs. Jean G., 16516 25th NE, Seattle, Wash 98155
 Wolford, Mr. Leon C., 7530 Forney Rd., Dallas, Tex, 75227 (AIS VP)
 Wood, Mr. Guy, 1960 Bayshore Dr., Englewood, Fla. 33533
 Wood, Mrs. Ira E., 37 Pine Court, New Providence, N. J. 07974
 Yakima Valley I. S. c/o Mrs. James Ford, 1801 S. 16th Ave., Yakima, Wash. 98902
 Ziems, Mr. Clinton, RD 1, Box 2, West Monroe, N. Y. 13167
 Zollinger, Mrs. Robert A., 5617 Quincy St., Hinsdale, Ill. 60521
 Zurbrigg, Dr. Lloyd, Box 5691, Radford College, Radford, Va. 24142
 OVERSEAS: (if address is needed please write the Editor for it)
 Mrs. Marlene Ahlburg, West Germany; Miss Waltraud Busbach, West Germany; Mrs. H. E. Collins, New Zealand; Mrs. Lucy Delany, New Zealand; Mrs. Jennifer Hewitt, England; Mr. Akira Horinaka, Japan; Mr. Bruno Muller, West Germany; Otago Group, N. Z. I. S., New Zealand; Dr. G. I. Rodionenko, USSR; Shillam, Rosewood Iris Gardens, S. Africa; Mr. Rijk. Sjeperda, Netherlands; British Iris Society, England; sorry, but there was no more room!--Peg.

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