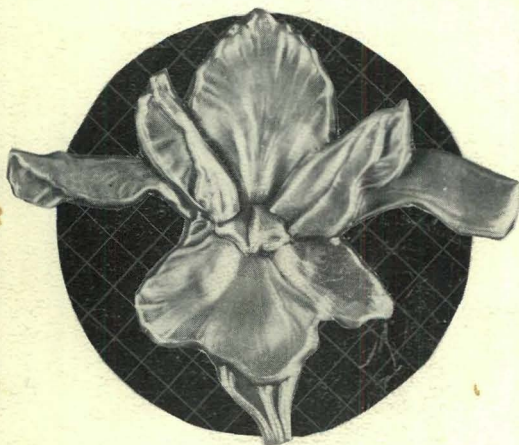


*The
Siberian
Iris*



*Volume 6
Number 5
Spring 1987*

THE SIBERIAN IRIS

Volume 6, Number 5

Spring 1987

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The Siberian Iris is published semi-annually by the Society for Siberian Irises. Editorial office is at 1015, Windwood Lane, West Lafayette, In 47906. Deadlines are February 15 and September 1; earlier receipt of material is appreciated. Black and white photographs and drawings are welcome. Please put name and address on the back if they are to be returned. Reprinting is by permission of the writer and the editor, with due acknowledgement.

Dues are; Single Annual, \$2.50;
Family Annual, \$3.00;
Single Triennial \$6.50;
Family Triennial \$7.50;

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Membership is open to all AIS members in Canada and the United States, and to all iris fanciers elsewhere.

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TREASURER'S REPORT TO FEBRUARY 1st., 1987

on hand, checking account.....\$1686.41

INCOME

Dues income	\$ 858.50
Book sales	558.70
Miscellaneous income	97.70
Interest	367.66

Total income.....\$1882.56

\$3568.97

EXPENSES

Printing, etc.	\$ 425.76
Postage	131.84
Typing	209.10
Advertising	160.00
Safety deposit box rent	5.00
Purchase C.D.	1000.00

Total Expenses.....\$1931.70

On hand (checking account.....\$1637.27

\$3568.97

on hand (certificates of deposit).....\$6000.00

Submitted by Gunther Stark

Publications

BACK ISSUES: All back issues will be \$1.50 each if available. We no longer have copies of some of the early issues. The Judging Standards should be ordered from the A.I.S. Checks for all publications, payable to the Society for Siberian Iris, should accompany orders. Send to the Publication Office, Mrs. Ruth Wilder, 802, Camellia Rd., Anderson, SC 29621. SIBERIAN IRISES, by Dr. Currier McEwen, is available from Mr. Julius Waderkamper, 15974 Canby Ave. Route 5, Faribault, MN 55021. The cost, including postage and handling is \$ 7.00.

SIBERIAN IRISES AS CUT FLOWERS

By Julius Wadekamper

Our florist asked me one day if we had any irises for sale as cut flowers. I was sure she had Dutch irises in mind since that is what the florists use. I told her we only had Siberians, and that I didn't think they would make suitable cut flowers, as they only lasted for two or three days. Apparently that suited her just fine. She said that the flowers they used for weddings and funerals only needed to last for the occasion. Unfortunately, in our smaller towns, weddings and funerals constitute almost the only use of fresh cut flowers.

Anyway, I brought her in a bucket of cut stems of Siberians, making sure to cut newly unfolding flowers so they would last longer. She was ecstatic since I had included such cultivars as Steve Varner, Butter and Sugar, Pink Haze, Dancing Nanou, Ego and Wing on Wing. We found that as "cuts" the flowers lasted a good four days. For beauty they could not be surpassed.

Transportation was very simple since the flowers do not break as the bearded iris do.

This experience with our local florist motivated me to take a bucket of a hundred and twenty stems to the market in Minneapolis. Again the flowers were wildly received and really appreciated. We put ten stems per bundle and twelve bundles per floral bucket, and charged \$3.00 per bunch for the flowers.

Unfortunately it was near the end of the Siberian season when I discovered their value as cut flowers. Next year we expect to start cutting at the beginning of the season. Fortunately cutting the flowering stems does not injure or diminish the plants. We are growing about three acres of Siberian irises so we do have a good selection from which to choose, as well as a lot of stems to cut.

I have seen some of the arrangements made by our florist and they are truly beautiful. Why not promote their use with your local florists. Be sure you explain their limited lasting qualities and try giving them the flowers for starters. Florists tend to use only flowers they are familiar with, and may be reluctant at first to purchase something new. A few donations for starters will make them change their mind very quickly.



THE BACKGROUND OF BUTTER AND SUGAR

By Currier McEwen
Morgan-Wood Medal winner
1986.

Of course I am very happy that Butter and Sugar was awarded the first Morgan-Wood medal and am glad to give this background information about it that our editor has requested.

Unfortunately, the parentage is only partly known. I want also to make clear at once that it came from breeding efforts in which there was no thought of obtaining yellow. In 1966 I was eager to have Cambridge and Dreaming Spires to use in my work with colchicine to induce tetraploid Siberian irises. I wrote to Mrs. Marjorie Brummitt in England, the originator of those two lovely blue diploids, explaining my purpose and requesting the two plants. Mrs. Brummitt not only sent the plants but, knowing that I would have to wait several years for them to bloom and provide flowers for crosses, she very kindly sent a packet of "bee pod" seeds from each for me to use at once. That is the reason for the incomplete knowledge of parentage because only the pod parent was known in each case.

The seeds were sprouted and treated with colchicine in February 1967. Approximately 20 seedlings in each batch survived the treatment and of these most were blue, about a third were white and among the white ones in each batch there was one which had quite yellow falls. The one from Dreaming Spires was introduced in 1971 as Dreaming Yellow and the one from Cambridge in 1973 as Floating Island, named after the pudding of yellow custard with egg white floating on top. All of those approximately 40 surviving seedlings proved to have been unaffected by the colchicine and were diploid.

Dreaming Yellow and Floating Island had come purely as lucky breaks, an example of McEwen luck, but once they bloomed it took no very high order of intelligence to recognize the importance of crossing them. This was done the summer of 1971. The resulting seeds were treated with colchicine

that winter. Twenty two survived of which only one, a rich blue-violet was tetraploid. All the others were diploids and all were white with varying amounts of yellow in the falls. Of these the best both in form and in depth of color was the second in the row, 71/33 (2), and it was selected in 1977 for introduction as Butter and Sugar. Not only is its form superior to that of its parents but the yellow of the falls is richer and is lasting. The falls of Dreaming Yellow and Floating Island are pleasingly yellow on the first day of bloom but then the color fades to creamy white. The yellow of Butter and Sugar is richer and persists without change and, indeed, is more pronounced on day four than that of the parents on the day of opening.

Since Butter and Sugar first bloomed it has of course been used as a parent many times. Some diploid seedlings from those crosses have been equally yellow and slightly better in form with more ruffling, but I have considered none enough different or better to warrant registration. A number of the seedlings have been converted to the tetraploid state. In some, as might be expected, the yellow color is richer but, up to 1986 all have been inferior, with poorly shaped flowers, short stalks or both. Then in 1986 for the first time some seedlings from the better of those tetraploids crossed with Golden Crimping showed promise in that first year of their bloom. It is interesting that Golden Crimping which has a good deal of yellow in it, comes from the creamy white Happy Event by a seedling involving Cambridge.

I am sorry that the full background of Butter and Sugar's parents is not known but I wonder whether Cambridge may not perhaps be particularly involved. Certainly Cambridge is in the parentage of Floating Island and Golden Crimping and since it surely had a prominent position in Marjorie Brummit's garden, it is possible that it might be the pollen parent of Dreaming Yellow. Looking farther back in their family trees, both Cambridge and Dreaming Spirens have White Swirl as their parent and Gatineau and Tycoon respectively as the pollen parents. This suggests that White Swirl also may be a potential parent for yellow. However, in view of the lack of knowledge as to the pollen parents of Dreaming Yellow and Floating Island all of this is sheer speculation.

ATTENTION HYBRIDIZERS

On reading the preceding article it struck me that Butter and Sugar was introduced in 1977, and with ten years gone by, there doesn't seem to have been much improvement in the yellow amoena class. But on checking the recent registrations I found besides Golden Crimping; Star Glitter (Hager, R. 1984.), Pas-de-Deux (Hollingworth, R. 1985), and Gelbe Moeve (Tamberg, 1986), so perhaps things are moving.

I would like to hear from you about any cultivars which have produced yellow amoena or yellow seedlings, and any experience you have had, or successes using Butter and Sugar or its parents in further developing yellows.

Judy



treasure hunt

The following items, rare in commerce are sought by members. If you can help please contact the person at the address listed.

GRACE STURTEVANT SIBERIANS

Does anyone grow Red Emperor (1924) or Opal Blue (1933)? If so, please contact:

Dr. Chandler Fulton,
21 Hillcrest Rd.,
Weston MA 02193

A GARDENER'S SCOURGE

By Judy Hollingworth

I am today declaring Public Enemy Number One to be SCALOPUS AQUATICUS, otherwise known as The Eastern mole.

Whenever a piece of ground is tilled, raked, and lovingly planted with promising seedlings, along comes you know who.

These are no simple insectivores, they are shrewd, wily, subterranean subversives. No matter that there are acres of uncultivated land around here, they're for the easy life. Why dig in hard unproductive land, when a big lug of a human will do all the heavy work for you, leaving just a Sunday afternoon stroll through the loam?

As I kneel, planting fork in hand, I sense beady eyes upon me, claws poised to move in and tunnel. Do they have a network of contacts, or do they work alone? Am I becoming paranoid?

I'm not the first person to feel this way. I phoned a friend who said the guest of Lady Vanessa he was growing was doing very well, but hoped the mole runs hadn't disturbed the roots. Now they're going after our irises in other peoples gardens! Is this a conspiracy?

My friend bought a hundred sticks of juicy fruit gum, carefully rolled them into balls, and dropped them down the mole holes. The moles are supposed to eat them, and unable to digest the gum, ruin their digestive tracts. Oh joy! I haven't talked to him since, so I don't know if this was a succesful ploy or not.

Our Cooperative Extension Service pamphlet* states that baits and poison gasses are unreliable extermination methods and that trapping is the most effective control. The scissor-jaw traps sitting outside our back door are wonderfully primitive iron contraptions with long sharp spikes, and lest you should feel just a twinge of sympathy for these furry creatures, the pamphlet also says that the keys to success are practice, patience, and persistance. "Moles (they advise) will evade, spring, heave out, or go around. improperly set traps, so keep trying until experience leads to success"

I feel more like screaming!

* Moles by Bobby Corrigan: Cooperative Extension Service: Pamphlet ADC-10 Purdue University, W. Lafayette. Indiana.

NOTES FROM THE ROBINS

Compiled by : Anna Mae Miller

I've been happy with the number of people who have shown an interest in the round robins and hope I have placed them in a robin where they can continue to learn. I would like there to be movement between robins when it is advantageous to the members.

Some comments from recent flights.

Martha Wilkins WI on planting procedure:

"I dig my holes, fill them with water, and when it seeps in I put peat moss with the top soil, and then the plant, with the bottom soil on top, and mulch. I think planting in the evening helps, so the plants get settled in overnight, before the hot sun gets to them."

Deborah Burklund CT a new robin member:

"Nothing gives me greater pleasure than travelling (England) to look at other gardens, or working in my own backyard. Iris fit beautifully with my lifestyle (teacher), for they are in their glory when school is in session. I love returning home to their serene beauty. The Siberians are so indestructible, they are a JOY."

Anna Mae Miller MI on growing seedlings, and transplanting:

"I plant my Siberian seeds outside in the fall, about as late as I can, so they do not germinate till next spring. I cut the bottoms out of tuna cans, sink them into the ground, and plant in them to curtail the plants and not let batches get mixed up.

It takes about 16 weeks of freezing and thawing to break dormancy. Cover with 1/2" of soil or sand.

Next April they'll germinate, and I transplant them when 3-4" tall, usually the first two weeks of June. They should be shaded and watered in with fertilizer water. This year (1986) with all the rain we had, my seedlings look good and have 3-4 rhizomes."

More and more people are sharing their experiences and are coming to the conclusion that Siberians should be planted in July and August

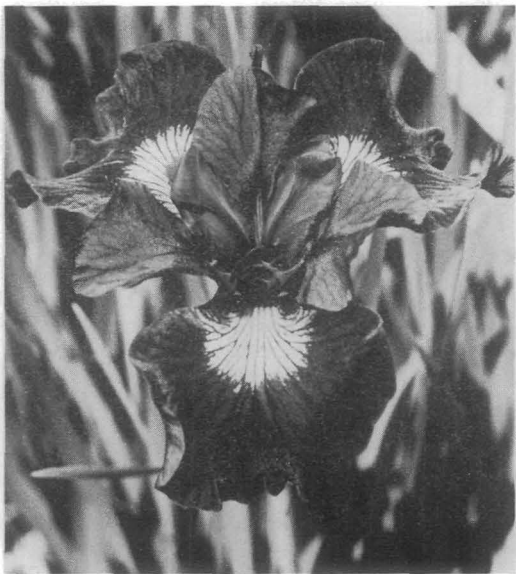
rather than September. Many say that in their gardens Spring is very satisfactory. Experiment a little and write your experiences. Another consideration with Siberians is keeping them damp when out of the ground.

Bee Warburton MA says:

"I wouldn't send a Siberian down the the street without wet wrapping and rolling up in Saran Wrap. And before I'm ready to wrap them, outdoors or in, I keep them in pails of water."

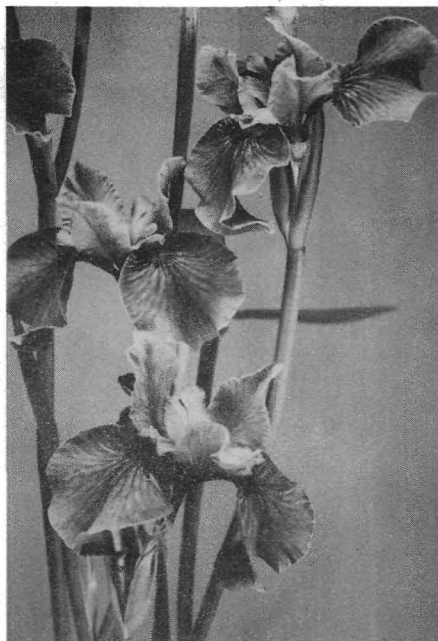
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1986 AWARD OF MERIT WINNERS



Shirley Pope: R. Currier McEwen 1979
HM 1981
AM 1986

Photo by: Bob Hollingworth



Left: Jaybird
 R. 1982 Ben Hager
 HM 1984
 AM 1986
 Photo by: Ben Hager

Below: Frosty Rim
 R. 1979 George Bush
 HM 1981
 AM 1986
 Photo by: George Bush



1985-1986 REGISTRATIONS & INTRODUCTIONS

-A-

ALICE MAE COX (H. Briscoe, SIB, R. 1984).
Borbeleta Gardens 1985.

ALMA BLUE (G. Bush, R. 1986). Sdlg. 49-48. SIB
(Tetraploid), 34"(86cm), M. Light blue; white and
green signal. Unknown parentage. EC 1985.

ANGLESEY (H. Foster, R. 1986). Sdlg.
12/78/231/83. SIB (diploid), 26" (65cm), M.
Lightly ruffled violet-blue (RHS 93B) with purple
lacing, golden green and white signal; fimbriated
violet-blue (93C) styles. White Swirl X Ruffled
Velvet. ST (Wisley) 1986.

ANNICK (C. McEwen, R. 1986). Sdlg. M76/93(7).
SIB, 12"(30cm), M. Dark violet-blue (RHS 89C),
veined darker (89A) on F.; white signal. I.
orientalis nana X I. sibirica. Seaways Gardens
1986.

-B-

BABY SISTER (C. McEwen R. 1986). Sdlg. M76/93A.
SIB (diploid), 6" (15cm), EM-M. Violet-blue (RHS
89D), veined darker on F.; white signal. I.
orientalis X I. sibirica. Seaways Gardens 1986.

BEDFORD LASS (K. Waite, R. 1985). Sdlg. WS-73-5A
SIB, 33"(84cm), M. Ruffled light blue-violet (RHS
97D), white and gold signal; lighter style arms.
Cambridge X Blue Burn. Tow Path Lane Gardens 1985.

BELLISSIMA (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1983). Joe Pye
Weed's Garden 1986.

BERLIN BLUEBIRD (T. Tamberg, R. 1986). Sdlg.
SST50. SIB, 29 1/2" (75cm), M. Clear medium blue
self. Blue Brilliant X White Swirl. Schoeppinger
Irisgarten 1985.

BERLIN DELFT (T. Tamberg, SIB, R. 1984).
Schoeppinger 1985.

BERLIN SIBCAL (T. Tamberg, R. 1986). Sdlg. 8119. SIB-CA, 29 1/2" (80cm), M. Reddish violet, veined yellow on F., small yellow signal. Induced yellowish 40/80 chr. SIB sdlg. X induced red-violet 40/80 chr. CA-SIB hybrid: (Berliner Risen x I. fernaldii). Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

BERNARD McLAUGHLIN (C. McEwen, R. 1985). Sdlg 74/12, SIB (diploid), 24" (60cm), M-L. S. pure white; ruffled, feathered pure white styles; F., pure white with few green lines. Ruffled Velvet X Wing on Wing. Seaways Gardens 1985.

BISHOP'S PAWN (Dale Johnson, R. 1986). Sdlg. S-232. SIB (diploid), 26" (66cm), E-M. Bishop's violet with blue blaze on center of F., gold signal. Unknown parentage. HC 1985

BLUE MEADOW FLY (M. Ahlburg, SIB, R. 1980). Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

BLUE PERIS (H. Foster, R. 1986). Sdlg. 12/78/225/83. SIB (diploid), 36" (90cm), E-M. S. dark violet-blue (RHS 89C); F. dark violet-blue (89B), broad gold and white signal; slightly ruffled. White Swirl X Ruffled Velvet. HC (Wisley) 1986.

BLUE REVERIE (C. McEwen, 1985). Sdlg T478/51(2). SIB (Tetraploid), 35" (89cm), E-LM. S. light blue (lighter than RHS 93D); very wide ruffled styles; F. light violet-blue (93D) ground veined darker (93B), white signal. T174/21(1): (Dear Delight x ((Cambridge x self) x (White Swirl x Pirouette))) X Harpswell Haze. Seaways Gardens 1985.

BLUE ROSEBUD (T. Tamberg, SIB, R. 1982). Schoeppinger 1985.

-C-

CIRCLE ROUND (C. McEwen, SIB, R. 1984) Seaways Gardens 1986.

CLASSIC DUDE (Paul R. Smith, R. 1985). Sdlg 2995. SIB, 25" (64cm), EM. S. beetroot purple (RHS 71A/72A); greyed beetroot purple styles; F. beetroot purple, darker purple midrib, gold signal, light grey rim. Unknown parentage. Paul R. Smith 1986.

CLASSIC LASS (Paul R. Smith, R. 1985). Sdlg 2985. SIB, 27" (69cm), EM. Spectrum violet (RHS 82B/82C) styles almost transparent, blue midrib. Unknown parentage. Paul R. Smith 1986.

COLORADO COLONEL (S. Varner, SIB, R. 1984). Illini Iris 1985.

-D-

DAVID HEBDITCH (C. Bartlett, R. 1985). Sdlg. C/WO l. SIB, 30" (76cm), M & RE. S. rich mid-blue; F. same, apple green throat and blaze, light tiger rim to hafts. Cambridge X Weisser Orient. SC (BIS) 1984.

DEMURE ILLINI (S. Varner, SIB, R. 1984). Illini Iris 1985.

DIXON (S. Varner, SIB, R. 1984). Illini Iris 1985.

-E-

EXCHANGE (M. Wilkins, SIB, R. 1984). Nekimi Hollow Gardens 1985.

EXUBERANT ENCORE (C. McEwen, R. 1985). Sdlg T379/56. SIB (tetraploid), 24" (61cm), VE-VL & RE. S. medium violet-blue (RHS 89C); F. light violet-blue (88B), heavily veined darker (89A), giving overall color effect of 89B, green hafts, gold signal. T176/68Z : (My Love x Violet Repeat) X Blue Encore. Seaways Gardens 1985.

-F-

FAR VOYAGER (J. Witt, CA-SIB, R. 1984). Witt 1985.

FINE TUNED (B. Warburton, R. 1985). Sdlg. AWW-80-9. SIB, 28" (71cm), M. & RE. S. violet-blue (RHS 96C); violet-blue styles with aqua midrib, floret type crests; F. lighter violet-blue (96D), darker (93A/C) shoulders. Atoll X Wing on Wing. Joe Pye Weed's Garden 1986.

-G-

GELBE MOEVE (T. Tamberg, R. 1986). Sdlg. SSTT169. SIB, 27 1/2" (70cm), M. S. white; F. light yellow, deep yellow signal. Dreaming yellow X Butter and Sugar.

GISCHT (M. Ahlburg, R. 1986). Sdlg B3/11. SIB, 23 1/2" (60cm), L. S. mid-blue; light blue styles; F. mid-blue, edged lighter; white and yellow signal. Dreaming Yellow X Fourfold White sib. Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

GOLDEN CRIMPING (C. McEwen, R. 1985). Sdlg. T6 79/122(1). SIB (tetraploid), 26" (65cm), E-LM. S. light cream (RHS 11D); F. cream (11C) with crimped yellow (17C) edge, yellow signal. T4 76/64(6): (T1 72/86B: ((Blue Brilliant x Unknown) x Cambridge) x Violet Joy sib) X Happy Event. Seaways Garden 1985.

GUTE LAUNE (A. Winkelmann, R. 1985). Sdlg. 78. SIB (tetraploid) 27 1/2" (70cm), E. Mid-blue self. Orville Fay X sdlg. Winkelmann 1985.

-H-

HALF MAGIC (P. Farmer, CA-SIB, R. 1985). Witt 1985.

HELIOTROPE BOUQUET (R. Hollingworth, SIB, R. 1984). Borbeleta Gardens, Windwood Gardens 1986.

HIGH STANDARDS (R. Hollingworth, R. 1986). Sdlg. 82D3C2. SIB (tetraploid), 44" (112cm), M. S. dark blue-purple; blue-purple styles; F. blue-purple, white and gold-yellow signal. 79F1: (Dreaming Spires x unknown) X Blue Pennant. HC 1985.

-I-

IDSON (L. Reid, R. 1985). SIB (40 chrom.), 28-30" (71-76cm), E. Deep purple, shading to black around signal; white and yellow signal, heavily stiched black-purple. Id X unknown. Laurie's Garden 1985.

ILLINI CROWN (S. Varner, R. 1985). Sdlg V9147. SIB 34" (86cm), M. S. medium deep wine red; F. deep wine red; small white signal veined red. V477: (Tealwood x self) X Deep Shade. Illini Iris 1986.

ILLINI FLIRT (S. Varner, SIB, R. 1984). Illini Iris 1985.

INDY (R. Hollingworth, SIB, R. 1984). Borbeleta 1985.

-J-

JAMAICAN VELVET (W. McGarvey, SIB, R. 1983).
Borbeleta, McGarvey 1985.

JANET K. MERRILL (H. Briscoe, SIB, R. 1984).
Borbeleta 1985.

JEWELLED CROWN (R. Hollingworth, R. 1985). Sdlg.
82J2A19. SIB (colchicine induced tetraploid), 24"
(61cm), M. Deep wine red, circular gold blaze on
F., fading to white; ruffled F. Ruffled Velvet X
Showdown. HC 1985.

-K-

KELAT SPIRES (G. Slade, SIB, R. 1984). Slade's
Iris 1985.

-L-

LADY VANESSA (R. Hollingworth, R. 1985). Sdlg.
82J2B8. SIB, 36" (91cm), M. S. light wine red;
feathered styles lighter than F.; F. medium wine
red, ruffled, inconspicuous white signal. Ruffled
Velvet X Showdown. Borbeleta Gardens, Windwood
Gardens 1986.

LAST ACT (C. McEwen, R. 1985). Sdlg. T4 78/174.
SIB (tetraploid), 30" (75cm), L-VL. S. medium
violet-blue (RHS 89C); F. medium violet-blue (88B)
veined 89A, giving overall color effect of 89C,
narrow white line extending down midline from
inconspicuous white signal. Dear Dianne X Adj.
Seaways Gardens 1985.

LEDERWEISSER (M. Ahlburg, R. 1986). Sdlg.
77B2/10. SIB, 26" (65cm), M. White self; yellow
signal. Snow Bounty X unknown. Schoeppinger
Irisgarten 1986.

LLYN BRIANNE (H. Foster, R. 1986). Sdlg.
15/75/205/83. SIB (tetraploid), 27 1/2" (70cm) L.
S. mid-blue; F. mid-blue, veined dark violet, gold
and green signal bordered white. Yankee Consul x
Silver Edge.

LURID TALES (P. Farmer, CA-SIB, R. 1983). Witt
1985.

-M-

MABEL CODAY (C. Helsley, SIB, R. 1984). C. Helsley 1985.

MAD MAGENTA (B. Warburton, R. 1986). SdIng. 84-6-1. SIB, 26" (66cm), M-L. Ruffled magenta (RHS 77A), with bluer shoulders on F., fringed and curled styles. Percheron X Silver Rose.

MARLENE AHLBURG (J. Hewitt, SIB, R. 1983). Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

MEADOW PRINCESS (M. Ahlborg, SIB, R. 1980). Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

-N-

NEIDENSTEIN (A. Winkelmann, R. 1985). SdIng. 6183. SIB (tetraploid), 31 1/2" (80cm), L. Red-violet self; young leaves yellow. Unknown parentage.

NEKIMI ROSE (M. Wilkins, SIB, R. 1984). Nekimi Hollow Gardens 1985.

-P-

PAS-DE-DEUX (R. Hollingworth, R. 1985). SdIng. 82K3C2. SIB, 26" (66cm), M-L. S. white; white styles; F. lemon yellow with some green veining; pleated. Butter and Sugar X 80X1B4: (Super Ego x Anniversary).

PINK SPARKLE (B. Hager, SIB, R. 1984). Melrose Gardens 1985.

POLLY CHISM (H. Briscoe, SIB, R. 1984). Borbeleta 1985.

POWYS PILOT (H. Foster, R. 1986). SdIng. 12/78/228/83. SIB (tetraploid), 31 1/2" (80cm), M. S. violet-blue (RHS 93B); F. same, gold signal, white blaze, silver edge. Ewen X Silver Edge.

POWYS PLUMES (H. Foster, R. 1986). SdIng. 12/78/228/83. SIB, (diploid), 29 1/2" (75cm), M. Lightly ruffled violet-blue (RHS 96B), veined purple, gold white signal; fimbriated styles. White Swirl X Ruffled Velvet.

PURPLE PROSE (B. Warburton, R. 1985). SdIng. ARV-82-20 SIB, 34" (86cm), M. Ruffled, silky violet (RHS 86C), violet styles with deep teal blue center, feathered midribs, curled crests. (Atoll x Ruffled Velvet) X Ruffled Velvet. Joe Pye Weed's Garden 1986.

-Q-

QUIET SHAPE (T. Tamberg, SIB, R. 1984). Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

-R-

RASPBERRY BLUES (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). SdIng. E-71-8. SIB, 19" (48cm), M. S. red-violet; red-violet style arms; F. red-violet shading to blue-violet at white signal, brown and green at hafts. Unknown parentage.

RASPBERRY PUNCH (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). SdIng. E-71-7. SIB, 26" (66cm), M. Red-violet, brown at hafts, white signal. Unknown parentage.

REGENCY BELLE (C. McEwen, R. 1985). SdIng. T5 79/211(1). SIB, (tetraploid), 28" (70cm), EM-LM. S. light violet-blue (RHS 89D); light blue (94C) styles; F. medium violet-blue (89C), white signal. Harpswell Hallelujah X Violet Joy. Seaways Gardens 1985.

REGENCY BUCK (C. McEwen, SIB, R. 1984). Seaways Gardens 1985.

REPRISE (B. Warburton, R. 1986). SdIng. 84-4-3. SIB, 32" (81cm), M-L & RE. Violet (RHS 88C) with darker veining (90B) on F.; narrow white signal; blended aqua and rosy violet styles. Silver Rose X George Henry.

RIVER CITY FLIRT (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). SdIng. E-74-18. SIB 27" (69cm), M-L. Moorish blue, yellow-brown hafts, small white signal. Unknown parentage.

RIVER CITY RHYTHM (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). SdIng. E-71-24. SIB, 24" (64cm), M-L. Methyl violet, brownish green hafts, small white signal. Unknown parentage.

RIVER CITY ROCKET (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). SdIng. E-71-19. SIB, 23" (58cm), M-L. Methyl violet, brownish green hafts, white signal. Unknown parentage.

RIVER CITY WINE (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). Sdng. E-71-5. SIB, 33" (84cm), M. S. red-violet; red-violet style arms; F. deep red-violet, yellow green hafts marked brown, large white signal. Unknown parentage.

ROY BOHRER (H. Briscoe, R. 1986). Sdng. 8145B. SIB, 24" (61cm), M. S. red-purple (RHS 72A); red-purple styles; F. deep red-violet(88A), tan hafts; slightly spicy fragrance. Violet Swirl X Varner V577.

-S-

SCHIFFSJUNGE (M. Ahlburg, R. 1986). SIB, 12" (30cm), M. Mid-blue self, white and yellow signal. Unknown parentage. Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

SCHOENE UNBEKANNT (M. Ahlburg, R. 1986). SIB, 20" (50cm), E. Red violet self; yellow and white signal. Unknown parentage. Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

SILVER ILLUSION (Dale Johnson, R. 1985). Sdng. S-222. SIB (diploid), 26" (66cm), E-M. S. white, veined green, sea green styles; F. greyed methyl violet, veined green, old gold signal, ruffled. Unknown parentage. HC 1985.

SILVER ROSE (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1984). Warburton 1985.

SKY MIRROR (B. Warburton, R. 1986). Sdng. AWW80-13. SIB, 35" (89cm), M-L. S. violet-blue (RHS 96D), darker veining on center line; violet-blue styles flushed aqua on each side of midrib; F. darker violet-blue (95A) surrounding distinct green signal, radiating out to lighter (96C) shoulders and edge. Atoll X Wing on Wing.

SNOW COVER (J. Wadekamper, R. 1985). Sdng. JW-5-74. SIB, 14" (35cm), M. White with yellow haft markings. Ego x unknown. Borbeleta Gardens 1985.

SPIRIT OF YORK (G. Bush, R. 1985). Sdng. 82-1035. SIB, 36" (91cm), M. S. rose-orchid; F. rose-violet, dusted gold, small white signal veined violet. Sparkling Rose X 80-275: unknown parentage. Bush 1985.

STAR GLITTER (B. Hager, SIB, R. 1984). Melrose Gardens 1985.

STARS BY DAY (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1984). Warburton 1985.

SYLVAN POND (J. Ennenga, R. 1986). SdIng. E-71-11. SIB, 27" (69cm), M-L. Lighter than moorish blue, yellow green hafts with brownish markings, small white signal. Unknown parentage.

-T-

TEMPER TANTRUM (W. McGarvey, SIB, R. 1969). Borbeleta Gardens 1986.

-V-

VALLEY OF DELIGHT (D. S. Varner, R. 1985). SdIng. 5060. SIB, 30" (76cm), EM. S. ruffled white, tinted pink; white styles tinted pink; F. deep pink, narrowly edged light pink. Dance Ballerina Dance X self.

VELVET CLOUD (N. Yunker, R. 1985). SdIng. ST-1-2. SIB, 31" (79cm), M-L. S. violet-blue (RHS 93B); violet-blue (91A) styles with deeper blending; F. violet-blue (89A), white area below greyed yellow signal. Dreaming Yellow X unknown. Yunker 1985.

VISUAL TREAT (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1983). Joe Pye Weed's Garden 1986.

-W-

WEISSE ETAGEN (T. Tamberg, SIB, R. 1984). Schoeppinger 1985.

WELFE (M. Ahlburg, SIB, R. 1980). Schoeppinger Irisgarten 1986.

WHITE TRIANGLES (B. Warburton, R. 1986). SdIng. 84-12-6. SIB, 30" (76cm), L. White with faint green hafts and pale yellow flush on midrib. ARV80-44: (Atoll x Ruffled Velvet) X Dear Delight.

WINDWOOD SPRING (R. Hollingworth, Sib, R. 1984). Borbeleta Gardens 1985.

WIZARDRY (R. Hollingworth, SIB, R. 1984). Borbeleta Gardens 1985.



FEATURING ONE OF OUR
OVERSEAS HYBRIDIZERS

"To Travel Hopefully Is
Better Than To Arrive"

By Harry Foster

This favourite aphorism,
all too appropriate to
Iris hybridisers, I
suspect sums up my
current status and
qualification in these
my early days as a

hybridiser of *Iris sibirica*. To be invited to
comment is a privilege indeed, but I do seek the
indulgence of readers when they realise just how
inadequate I feel with so little experience behind
me as yet.

However, to set the scene of my activities,
imagine a characteristic Walt Disney film opening
high above a hazy, golden green-tinted landscape,
another Sleepy Hollow set within low rounded
mountains and the silver ribbons of the salmon-run
rivers of South Wales, just across the sea from
Ireland. Soaring high above this image, you slowly
spiral down into one of the loveliest valleys in
Britain, and begin to see coming up towards you
through the amber mists the dark framed patterns
of tiny mediaeval crazy-hedged fields, scattered
clumps of mixed trees, dark woods and majestic
oaks and beeches dotted throughout. Among them lie
ancient Welsh villages, hamlets and farmhouses in
the valley bottoms and spreading up the lower
slopes of the surrounding hills and mountains. You
can glide down into this, the Usk valley, above
the little village of Crickhowell and see traces
of over eight thousand years of settlement: the
prehistoric chambered tomb of Gwernvale, the
Norman castle on its motte, the mediaeval church,
the ancient trackways and the Dark Age fortifi-
cations of the Welsh Prince Hywel who gave his
name to the village down below his own massive
walls perched on the mountain side Crug Hywel. An
ancient bridge crosses the river Usk here, where
Roman troops once marched to conquer and absorb
the British Tribes whose successors are the Welsh.
As the details sharpen below you see the ancient

main street winding steeply up from the bridge, the Hostelry at its end, the small nucleus of the old village and small modern housing areas here and there on the slopes around. You notice one such area occupying what once was an old farm and cider orchard up above the village to the north, resting upon the steep slopes below Hywel's hillfort on the flank of the Black Mountains. At the edge of this little estate of small dwellings is a row looking out over the valley to the south. One of these homes has a long strip of garden rising up the slope, hedged in beech, hornbeam and field maple. Passing by its upper edge is an ancient hollow trackway leading up to Crug Hywel itself. Buried in the garden's very deep, slightly acid boulder clay sandstone soil we found flint arrowheads, shot in anger or while hunting game a thousand years before Prince Hywel came to rule here a thousand years ago. Not surprisingly perhaps, such a powerful heritage beneath our feet affects how we feel about our lifestyle, our commitments and our aspirations, and not least about our irises.

To see a new plant arise from such an historic soil is meaningful in itself, but to plan it and form it in the warm encouragement of friends in both the American and British Iris Societies is quite something. Maureen and I begin to understand why so often irises by name or by association reflect key emotional values of their creators. The fact that we are at present the only iris hybridisers in Wales is significant and a challenge.

For me, it all started in earnest at the British Iris Society's main show in London in 1981. Having moved into our new home and dug up the bit of ancient pasture which formed its garden that spring, Maureen had been determined to grow tall bearded irises and the garden was planned to do just that. The Summer Show visit was our first direct contact with the BIS, and in order to avoid treading on Maureen's toes as it were, I wandered off deliberately to attempt to find a different kind of iris which might fire my own totally inexperienced enthusiasm (not having had a garden before). In time, and many pleasures later, I came face to face with the exhibits of *Iris sibirica*, and that was it.....

I loved the simplicity and purity of form, the graceful, airy bearing and the lambent quality of their colours. I also enjoyed their unfamiliarity. Thus beautifully beckoned, I fell thoroughly to

their charm and decided forthwith not only to grow sibiricas, but to create my own someday. I was privileged to meet one or two BIS sibirica growers and to study the results of their recent hybridisation work. Looming large upon this horizon but as yet beyond my ken unfortunately, was the figure of Tomas Tamberg who was visiting and exhibiting. With hindsight, a sadly missed opportunity to meet him. However, I did meet and gain immeasurably from Jennifer Hewitt who has stimulated, steered and supported ever since, as she has done and is doing for so many others here and abroad. My first purchase (from Robert Schreiner) was of Ewen and this led me to contact Currier McEwen which in turn led to his visit to Wales in 1982, reported by him elsewhere and illustrated talking to the writer in TSI, Spring 1984. Thus at the end of May 1982 Currier and I walked the small areas set aside for future sibiricas, and blessed them. We looked at my few young plants, either imported from Schreiners or gifted by Jennifer, plus the odd unauthenticated seedling picked up in a plants sale, and we talked of the future. For me a treasured experience, frustrated somewhat by my own abject ignorance, but Currier did a wonderful job in mapping out principles, standards and goals for the years ahead. I cannot thank or praise him enough for opening these crucial doors for me in such timely fashion and so unselfishly. Characteristic of him as I came to learn and read. We explored my early thoughts on sibirica forms and later enjoyed slide demonstrations of his latest cultivars. Subsequently he generously gifted plants which in the main have formed the core of my garden and around which have been added the sibiricas I most enjoy from Ben Hager and Steve Varner. Having retained my particular liking for reds most of these recent acquisitions are of their red introductions while I also grow some of the timeless beauties introduced by Marjorie Brummitt. Again I must acknowledge the helpfulness and generosity of Ben Hager throughout the past few years.

My first crosses to be made with any serious background research were in 1983, followed by a fairly determined and restricted program in 1985. These early efforts have no scientific elements but are characterised by my belief that my pleasure in creating a new hybrid is increased by my knowledge of its pedigree, its care, its control and its record keeping. I find too many

instances of and references to "unknown", "unrecorded" and "label lost" in the records. (I also found Currier's notes on this point, TSI, Spring 1986, relevant.) These uncertainties and omissions diminish even the most lovely of less well authenticated or bee-crossed flowers. Being also somewhat of an iris conservative I suppose I find myself powerfully drawn to "classical" sibirica forms and rejecting the more extreme over-innovative variations towards flattened all round form where Japan and Siberia appear to overlap florally speaking, with too broad, overlapping falls; the long propellor-like fall; the insignificant standards; the over-thickened and unyielding stem, often unbranched, and in fact, the lack of branching generally. Many such characteristics reflect recent work in tetraploidy and are those aspects of this treatment which I find interesting but lacking in grace. I find myself unlikely to wish to follow these directions or to love such flowers unduly, despite the frequent joyful creation such blooms can be. I find the airy space between the sibirica falls, and particularly the near fleur-de-lis profile, well balanced, arched and attractive from all aspects, as seen in so many modern siberians, it is quite delightful. What is perhaps more important is the characteristic aspect of the garden clump, multi-stemmed, multi-branched, and a forest of bloom, leaning lissom in the breeze and set against the TBs or the more stolid garden plantings. Imagine a 39" tall clump of some 50 stems of Silver Edge dancing against a swirling backcloth of over 80 stems of Anniversary and Creme Chantilly, both up to 48" tall, and beautifully branched and bloomed. Such was one of the many lovely views here in 1986.

Well, I've mentioned Silver Edge, still probably my favourite, and it was its grandparent, White Swirl which suggested to me the potential benefit of back-crossing, using another favourite grandchild, Ruffled Velvet, hoping to bring out family form or colour (particularly red) characteristics. The results of this 1983 WS x RV cross flowered in 1986. Their range was wide and fell into two colour groups, whites and purple-blues. Form varied enormously but three of the violet-blues were each distinctive and very appealing. Two carried Ruffled Velvet's fimbriated style arms as well as having triple terminal buds. One in particular was graced by a delightful dark purple over-lacing on the violet-blue falls, a

feature which I hope shows up in the accompanying drawing. Along with four others, this sibirica, now named Anglesey after the historic island off the north-west coast of Wales was registered in 1986. Three are from the WS x RV cross, Anglesey, Blue Peris, a lofty, dainty rich purple flower, and Powys Plumes, the other nicely formed violet-blue with fimbriated style arms. Powys is the name of the county in Wales in which we live. Powis Castle, by the way, is likely to have our first national sibirica garden established upon one of its terraces under the guidance of Jennifer Hewitt.



Illustration : "Anglesey" R. 1986 Harry Foster.
Drawn by Harry Foster.

The other two 1983 crosses which bore pleasant fruit for me were Silver Edge X Ewen, producing Powys Pilot, a beautifully formed red-purple tetraploid, and Silver Edge X Yankee Consul. This last cross created one seedling in particular which I liked very much. It is a large heavily furled bloom with rich mid-blue falls bearing a dazzling large splayed signal. It is immediately distinctive, and lovely, even at a considerable distance. It is named after a wind-ruffled lake set amid the forests and mountains of central Wales, Llyn Brienne. I was delighted to find that Anglesey gained a BIS Seedling Commendation in 1986 and was selected for trial at Wisley. It has been interesting to note subsequently just how popular Ruffled Velvet has become as a parent worldwide.

Later acquisitions and admirations led to my decision to work entirely in the red group for a while, hopefully to achieve a golden fringe on a purple fall, or silver upon red. Three sibiricas were selected for this in 1985, all from one of Currier McEwen's main lines, namely Reddy Maid, Hubbard, and Silver Edge again, following its excellent performance with Ewen, and also thinking of its line from Polly Dodge and Violet Flare. Each was crossed both ways several times over two weeks resulting in the planting of some 120 seedlings last November. Meanwhile, Ben Hager's reds, particularly for me Chilled Wine, are waiting on the touchline for the next stage, once I begin to see where I'm going, if anywhere. Hopefully is indeed the word and I suspect some readers may be saying that in being hopeful even, I'm rather ambitious.....faint heart ne'er won fair reward.

1986 saw little developement here, for at this early stage I really feel a need to quantify and qualify what has been done so far, before breaking any fresh ground (or making mistakes over and over again). In the meanwhile one or two other recent acquisitions have become garden favourites of mine, and have drawn the attention of many BIS members. Currier's superb Harpswell Happiness above all drew much admiration when shown in 1986. It was also chosen for trial at Wisley and is thought to be the best white to date. Surprisingly, it also remounted here quite beautifully in 1986, as did Dreaming Yellow and Chartreuse Bounty. As Dreaming Yellow and its offspring Butter and Sugar figured nicely in TSI Spring 1986, I thought the accompanying photo-

graph of the beautiful Dreaming Yellow remonting vigorously at the end of July and being duly admired by the writer would be appropriate to this article. It flowered 38 stems in June at 31" tall, then a quite distinct subsequent rebloom occurred in late July, 12 stems nicely branched at 43" tall as seen in the photo.



Harry Foster with Dreaming Yellow reblooming late July 1986 in the Crickhowell garden.

Photo : Maureen Foster
Print (from slide) by Bill Keen

There does seem to be something in the belief that most sibiricas, and indeed many other irises, grow taller here than is the norm, but whether the garden can aspire to greater things in the years ahead lies in the lap of the Celtic gods of fertility, deep beneath this little garden in Wales.



the last word

Judges by virtue of their training vote for Siberians worthy of awards. Members attending National Conventions choose their favorite convention irises, but there is no way for us, the general SSI members to express our opinion. And so I thought it might be fun to have our own ballot. Besides giving every member a chance to participate and register their preferences, the resulting list might be a useful guide for people just starting out with Siberians, because it should give a good idea of which irises do well over a wide geographical area. To get some useful information from the results though, we need to have strong participation, so keep it in mind as you visit gardens this spring, and in your own of course, make good notes, and then return the enclosed form by September 15th. If we get a good response I would like to make this a yearly feature.

Someone mentioned that we have many beginning growers who could benefit from the expertise of our older members. If you have a question about culture or hybridizing send it to me and I will try and find an expert to answer it for you in the following issue.

Chandler Fulton suggested that we have a "Plants Wanted" section in which members could locate sources for Siberians which are of historic importance, or rare in commerce. I would like to expand this to include rare books, photos, back issues etc. and we are starting it off with this issue. This is not meant to be a general swap meet! which of course is not our function, but for rare items only. Look for it under the heading of "Treasure Hunt"

When you are taking photos this spring pop a roll of black and white print film in your camera and take some photos of your favorite Siberian clumps, garden views, "iris people" You can do it in an hour and then have your camera free for those important color shots. Then mail the black and whites off to the editor! It is quite expensive to turn color slides into black and white prints, it would help me build up a photo

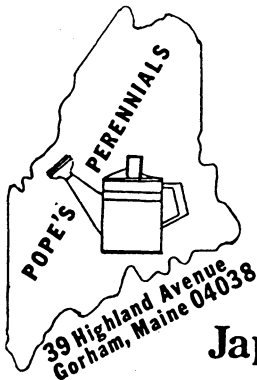
file, and would ensure , particularly if you are a hybridizer that your irises are presented effectively.

My "last word" seems to be running into several hundred which is nothing new, ask my husband, but before I finish I would like to thank all the contributors to this my first issue, I had a 100% positive response to my requests for articles, and Dave Silverberg kindly provided negatives and prints of the Morgan-Wood medal which I used for the cover and for the article on the medal winner.

Judy



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