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Fall '61

THE SIBERIAN IRIS



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By

The Society For Siberian Irises

C O N T E N T S

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MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

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

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NEW MEMBERS SINCE LAST ISSUE

Baird, Mrs. Thew	22 Balcom Avenue, Corning, New York
Bergin, Mrs. Joe L.	6015 Gaston Avenue, Dallas 14, Texas
Bohret, Mrs. C.A.	16 Germantown Road, Danbury, Conn.
Brink, Mr. Paul	77 Huron Street, Milan, Ohio
*Cassebeer, Mr. Fred	Strawtown Road, West Nyack, New York
Conroe, Dr. Irwin	Star Route, Altamont, New York
Cosgrove, Mr. Clark	8260 Longden, San Gabriel, Cal.
Day, Mrs. L. E.	Mountain Avenue, Murray Hill, N.J.
Decker, Mrs. Clyde M.	2265 Madison Avenue, Ogden, Utah
Detamore, Mrs. Cleora	122 N. Main Street, Andrews, Ind.
Emery, Mrs. G. H.	620 West Gray, Elmira, New York
Gatty, Mr. Joseph	5-22 Hazel Place, Fairlawn, N.J.
Gutkunst, Mrs. J. B.	State Center, Iowa
Hale, Mrs. Johnson B.	319 W McLendon Circle, LaGrange, Ga.
Hillyer, Mrs. Edward J.	Rock Hall, Kent County, Maryland
Hoffman, Mrs. John H.	Hilaire Hill, Kennett Square, Pa.
Johnson, Mrs. G. Hubert	Route 1, Box 609, Jamestown, N. Car.
Judd, Mrs. J. W.	318 Nye Drive, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Kanela, Mrs. Stephen	16 Mylod Street, Walpole, Mass.
McEwen, Dr. Currier	Palisade Ave. at 255th St., New York 71, N. Y.
Nesbit, Mrs. Jos. S.	248 Summour Street, Norcross, Ga.
Sargo, Mrs. Sam	RFD #7, Box 80, Hot Springs, Ark.
Suplee, Mr. Joseph	1363 Lombardy Blvd., Bay Shore, N.Y.
Swezey, Miss Charlotte	The Flower Bowl, East Hampton, N.Y.
Thoma, Mrs. Michael V.	Bunker Hill, Nassau, N. Y.
Tolleson, Mrs. T. E.	441 Lanhorn St.S.W., Atlanta, Ga.
Wilkie, Mrs. Harry	302 North Main St., Bellbrook, Ohio
Ziems, Mr. Clinton	West Monroe, New York

* Through some error Mr. Cassebeer's name as a Charter Member was omitted from the Membership List in the first issue.

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Report of Membership Committee

At the time of our May 1961 issue of The Siberian Iris we had forty regular members, three honorary members and one corresponding member. Since that time we have gradually added twenty-eight new members bringing the total to seventy-two members. We are sorry to say we lost one member when it was ascertained he was not a member in the American Iris Society. Remember when inviting people to join our society that membership in the American Iris Society is necessary to qualify for membership in the Society for Siberian Iris.

We are very gratified with our rate of growth but let's try to bring our membership up to the hundred mark by the time our next copy of this publication is ready for publication. Invite your iris friends to become members, if necessary get them to join the AIS. It is a very wise investment and one which pays rich dividends.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I think maybe we should have a contest to get a new title for this 'colyum', it sounds so dignified and stuffy, and besides I sort of squirm when addressed as Madam President, even though it has been happening, off and on, in various organizations, for several years. Presidents should be grave, dignified, sober and efficient; I'm really none of these things. What I really like to do, when I attend meetings, is sit in the back row and heckle, and make snide remarks in a clearly audible undertone (if you know what I mean?) However, I will say in my own defense, when I do land up front, I TRY to do the job right. And sometimes, in my cockeyed way, I do manage to accomplish something; maybe even something that a Proper President couldn't, simply because a Proper President wouldn't think of trying it.

I think we have some useful matters considered in this issue of The Siberian Iris. I would ask you to take particular note of the list of seed sources provided by the Research Committee, and the accompanying comments. Please, dear members, try to obtain and grow a few of the species, describe them carefully or take color slides of them, or both, and send in the descriptions and slides. As you will see in Mr. Kitton's letter, the species descriptions are not 100% dependable; some show a great deal of variation, and if the Research Committee is to provide us with useful descriptions it needs to know more about these variations, and about their ranges of hardiness and reactions to different climates. If you are already growing species, please try selfing and crossing them, using such controls as can make certain your seeds are the result of a true cross; grow, observe and describe the seedlings. ALL the seedlings, not just the two or three you like best! This is the kind of information that can give the research department clues to such things as dominance of color, form, hardiness and so on; and these are the facts that the hybridizers need to know to produce finer Siberians for your gardens, No one researcher, no one hybridizer, can make all the crosses, grow all the variations of all the species, that are needed to collect all the information that is needed. It is up to us ordinary members to do what we can to help them. In the long run, we are helping ourselves!

I have a little effusion, a little further on, and Mildred Johnson has another, on making Siberians more readily visible to the iris-growing public. This is another area in which you can help our Society. If there is an iris show, or general show with iris classes, available when your Siberians are in bloom, enter them; if you have even half a dozen named varieties, invite the public to come see them; dry a few for out-of-season displays at your local iris group meetings, or for dried arrangements in flower shows. Get our iris where other people can see them!

Now I have a small apology to make, about elections. I realized, too late, that I should have put the Nominating Committee to work in June. I didn't. As a result, between people being on vacation during the summer months, and part of the Committee being rather involved in September, with the reopening of school, the Nominating Committee was not able to submit a slate by October 1, as required in the By-Laws. But you will receive a slate (if you have not already) and you will then have time to make further nominations - petitions must be signed by eight voting members-- and if there are further nominations, ballots will be sent out promptly; please return them as promptly. Mrs. Johnson will announce the results as fast as possible and the new officers will take office on January 1, 1962, as scheduled. Next time we will know better!

Peggy Edwards

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This list is undoubtedly incomplete; it does not include articles in the Bulletin, or portions of books on the Iris which cover the Siberians, and it is possible that #a 3, 9a & b, and 10 do not cover the Siberians, or only touch lightly on them. It is based on the bibliography of W. T. Allen of Newport News, VA., on articles on Iris outside of the Bulletin and other AIS publications.

Irene Van De Water

Our Foreign Correspondents

Extracts from a letter from Maurice Kitton; written April 1, 1961, received too late for the first issue of *The Siberian Iris*.

...I am delighted to learn that at last the so-neglected *Sibirica* is to have a Society of its own and I am naturally very honoured to be asked to become a corresponding member. I gladly accept....The plain fact is that it is quite impossible for any one person to do more than touch the fringes of what I now believe is a most complicated subject. It is reasonable to think that there must be some rules that apply to this subsection but after twenty years I'm d...d if I know what they are, nor can I guess.

It is my belief that (some) so-called species are not true species ... in that they will not breed true. I have not endeavoured to explore this particular subject but the plants of *Wilsonii*, *Forrestii* and *Delavayi* which I have had (and which I have mainly used) have not bred true and one has only to look back to Dykes (who was writing quite soon after these were first introduced) to know that variations existed then. *Chrysographes* is a better known example and Dykes speaks of the wide range of color and habit. I have scarcely used *chrysographes* myself, and when I have, all its worst faults seem to be dominant. I remember Mrs. Russell (you will perhaps have heard of her) telling me some years ago that someone of her acquaintance had persevered with *chrysographes* over a period of years but had got nowhere and had given it up. My own experience is on the same lines.

...You will gather from what I have already said that I am quite unable to give a clear description of any true species. So far as I am aware I have never seen one although of course it is easy to distinguish a group and say, for example, that it is *Forrestii* but within that group there will be a lot of variation and I suspect that some members of such a group are more susceptible to hybridization than are others. I am sorry to say that I know nothing of *phragmitetorum* and could not have spelt it without your letter in front of me!

...Having made a number of first crosses e.g. *Delavayi* x *Forrestii*, *Delavayi* x *Wilsonii*, *Forrestii* x *Eric the Red* (very lucky this), I am now breeding from these crosses with quite interesting results and have not so far found it desirable to cross back. *Wilsonii* and *Forrestii* are bad doers and difficult to grow and bloom (in Kent, England) so that I do not want to go back to them if I can possibly help it. They have given me some color breaks which I am trying to develop. *Delavayi* is a great help because it is quite the most vigorous and grows better than any other including *sibirica* and *sanguinea*. It imparts this vigor to its progeny and generally makes life easier for an amateur hybridizer.

I remember telling you that *Delavayi* x *Forrestii* seedlings averaged about 18" or less and this was quite true when I told you. Since then they have really taken hold and have formed large clumps full of bloom on stems 3 feet to 4 feet in height. Why they should have 'marked time' for a year or two I have no idea and now of course they much more resemble *Delavayi* in habit than *Forrestii*. The colouring is areas of various shades of blue on yellow and when I tell you that my family calls them leopards it will convey their appearance. They make very

nice cut flowers but the colours are not sufficiently sharp to show off well in the garden but I am of course using them for hybridizing. It is rather interesting that the same clone of Delavayi with Wilsonii gives very vigorous seedlings but without a trace of yellow. In this case the colour is various shades of lightish blue of a kind that I have never before seen in this section. It is hard to describe but it has a sort of iridescence that my wife describes as an electric blue. If they continue to do well one or two of the best of them might be worth naming - we shall see. In the meantime of course I am using this for crossing.

Letter of June 3, 1961

...Ours (season) is nearly over although I still have quite a number of the later seedlings (mainly from Forrestii) to bloom. With me these are anything from three weeks to a month after the first of the sibericas...I have done another article for the (British Iris Society) Yearbook...in the hope that the slowly awakening interest should be kept alive.

...the F2 from a white x Helen Astor...some bloomed this year and were quite terrible.. I have definitely come to the conclusion the Helen Astor line is not worth following (further).

* * * * *

ADDITIONS TO SIBERIAN IRIS CHECKLIST

BLUE OWL (Cleveland 1926) Blue

DISTINCTION (Barr 1910) M-blue blend.

PETER PAN (Perry 1923) L-reddish-blue bitone.

PIGMY is Perry's Pigmy.

PERRY'S PIGMY (Perry 1912) Dwarf, B-blue self.

The above names were received from Mrs. Tiffney too late to be incorporated into the list given in our first issue of May 1961. From time to time we may have others to add to the Checklist.

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DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES

SIBERIANS FOR CONVENTIONS

It is too late to send any seedlings or newly introduced varieties to the 1962 Convention, but if you have anything you would like seen in Denver it would be accepted next spring or early summer. Mr. J. O. Riley, 4284 Hooker St., Denver 11, Colorado, has written to say that there is a small Siberian iris garden in the Denver Botanic Garden, quite close to the Guest Garden for the Convention, which can accommodate quite a few of the newer Siberians, as their collection, listed below, is mostly of quite old varieties. However, if you wish to donate anything to this planting, please write Mr. Riley first to make sure you are not duplicating a previous donation. As this Region is planting the Siberian Garden and maintaining it at their own expense, and have a small budget to work with, I think we should encourage them as far as possible. Another point is to be sure what you send is a true specimen; they have apparently been given improperly named plants which had to be grown on until properly identified, or should one say "unidentified"? This is wasting time, space and money. This is what they have:

Blue Moon	Melisande	Silvertip
Caesar's Brother	Morning Magic	Skylark
Crystal Charm	Mountain Lake	Snowcrest
Gatineau	Mrs. Rowe	Summer Sky
Gayheart	My Love	Sunny Brook
Heavenly Blue	New Blue	Tropic Night
Helen Astor	Nigrescens	Tunkhannock
Kootenay	Nora Distin	Tycoon
Lady Godiva	Oberon Blue	Zest
Lady Northcliffe	Royal Herald	

They can accommodate about 25 more plants; why not check your newer varieties and see what you could spare a fair clump of, and check with Mr. Riley this winter or early spring? Let's help them put on a good show of Siberians for the Convention!

By the same token, what about our hybridizers sending divisions of their registered and introduced new varieties, or numbered seedlings they think particularly good, to the Convention Committees for 1964 and 1965. If you are not sure that a seedling is an advance over what is on the market, try to get a few judges to look at it, or other Siberian fanciers, and get their honest opinions. Keep an eye on the Bulletin to learn when, where and how to send guests to the Conventions.

Another thought along these lines: if you have a surplus of better named varieties of Siberians, perhaps there is a Botanic Garden near you which would like a gift. Always ask first; don't just show up one fine day with two dozen clumps and drop them on the Director's desk. But many such gardens work on low budgets and cannot keep their plantings up to date in all respects; a gift of plants they need might be a real help both to the garden and to our pet iris-and if it is from your surplus you probably would rather see it go this way than have to dump it on the compost heap.

Peg Edwards

* SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD *

Ben R. Hager, Melrose Gardens reports on several Siberians:

WHITE SWIRL (Cassebeer) This one is such an advance that it doesn't look like a Siberian iris --almost. Wide and flaring in gleaming white with very little yellow on the falls. Large flowers and a most vigorous grower here in the West. The Morgan Award should be revived for this one alone if necessary.

VELVET NIGHT (Peggy Edwards) We will introduce this one for Peggy next spring, and a worth while introduction it is. Not for those who like their flowers BIG, this has smallish flowers but in excellent form and a color quality that is new in Siberian iris. A truly velvety, deep piled, texture and color in dark luminous purple. There is practically no signal and there are no markings on the top of the falls. Good grower.

BLUE CAPE (Kitton 1957) From England and new to us. We were surprised at the size of the individual flowers, the heavy substance and very strong stem. The color is not unusual in Siberian iris, but the other features make it a most attractive and showy specimen in the garden, and should be of interest to breeders especially.

Siberica NANA, a dwarf, a real dwarf, about 12" tall with lush, vigorous, short foliage and wide flaring white flowers that just top the leaves. We had it planted next to White Swirl and they looked like a 'mother-daughter' team. This one recently received from England but is not a new one. In fact, no one seems to know exactly WHAT it is, except utterly charming. I made seed pods with ACUTA which should be interesting.

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*** Thanks for comments on the first issue of The Siberian from Mr. Eugene M. Myers, South Bend, Indiana.

"We think it is excellent and are sure you and your committee put much hard work in it. It is a very complete history of our flower, the Siberian iris, which we have been unable to find anywhere else. -- We have had a very good Siberian bloom this season and the weather was cool and ample rainfall. Our big problem was with weeds all summer. They keep coming back." (We all seem to have this problem in common--if iris grow well, so do the unwanted weeds.)

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SHOWING SIBERIAN IRIS
Peg Edwards

The first task in fulfilling your aim of showing your Siberians is to get classes for them into show schedules. If your local iris group or garden club is planning a show, first, try to steer them into having the show when the Siberians will be in bloom; having done which (says she, very nonchalantly) try to get classes, both in Horticulture and in the Artistic Section, in which they can be shown. You may not be able to talk the schedule chairman into setting up an arrangement class requiring Siberian iris, but "iris other than bearded" will fill the bill for a starter. As for the Horticultural classes, you may not achieve the ideal of a complete Section for Siberians which would allow their being grouped by color, in detail, but a group of three classes in a Section for Apogons, or even for "any iris other than bearded" which would include the bulbous iris, would allow you to show white, blue and violet varieties. Almost everyone who grows iris at all, and many other gardeners, will have at least one or two clumps of Siberians, so you should be able to get a little competition.

Next comes the task of preparing and selecting the specimens you want to show. Be sure that the ones you choose have NO blemishes. A tiny pinhole through the bud will be a fair-sized gap when the bud opens. Leafspot, tears or chewed spathes and stem leaves are not to be tolerated. Choose clean, flawless stalks, with the top bud out of the spathe and just starting to uncurl, and cut carefully so as not to damage the fan of foliage, about one to two inches above the base of the stem. In choosing between varieties in the same color class remember that a branched stem will usually score higher than an unbranched one; a small bloom with clear, bright color will usually win over a larger bloom with a dull color or a blotchy pattern; but, other things being equal the larger flower will win. If you select a Siberian with veining, be sure it is a crisp clear pattern. Texture counts too; pick varieties which are fresh and crisp, not (like some I've seen) limp, soggy or too thin. Tie a label on each stalk with it's name.

Having decided which varieties you will use, cut them, IN BUD, just beginning to puff out, at least the day before the show. You can cut them two days ahead if you have a cool place to keep them. As soon as you have cut a stalk, place it in water so that it will be held erect, and wrap a facial tissue carefully around the bud, and tie it with a piece of soft yarn or even a piece of Scotch tape long enough to wrap completely around and overlap; this tie should be just tight enough to hold the bud closed without squeezing it. If there seems to be any likelihood of a bud opening on a branch as well, be prepared to give it the same treatment at the same stage. (It could happen in transit, if you are carrying your exhibits on an overnight trip). Keep the stalks in cool water until you are ready to leave for the show. The simplest way to transport them is in bottles, such as Coke or other soda pop, in the cardboard carriers that hold six bottles. Wedge the stems so that they are perfectly erect; you may find that you can carry two or even three stems in one bottle and they will wedge each other. If you

can't use bottles to transport them (wall-to-wall mink on the car floor?) wrap the bottom of each stem in tissues, tie, and dip in water, and slip the stem into a plastic bag. One bag will accommodate a number of stems. Then tie the neck of the bag firmly around the stems. Another bag can be drawn down over perhaps three or four of the tied-up buds, or if you have a nice LONG bag, you can perhaps put all the stems in one bag and tie the top over the buds. For tying the stems into their tissues and into the bags I find twistems or similar wire ties most useful.

If you only have a 20 or 30 minute drive from house to show, it is fairly safe to lay the package on the back seat of the car, but it is not advisable for any longer time - you would arrive with the buds starting to tip upwards. Yes, even with the wrappings! If you have a heavy crock, kettle or pot, set the stalks in this, pack well with paper to keep them from tipping, and it will really help if you tie the bundle to a couple of bamboo plant stakes - the $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thickness and about a yard long. This will help to keep the stems from whacking against the car seat or door in transit and perhaps snapping.

Well, here you are at the show, with flowers in prime shape-except that they are in bud. As you place each stem in its container for the show bench, carefully untie the tissue around the bud and unwrap it. It should, within a few minutes, unfold. If it doesn't, don't despair - there are things you can do about it. First try pressing gently with the fingertip just at the top of the bud; this will often release the petals and they will open. If they still cling together, blow gently down into the bud where the petals have begun to unroll. No? Then fill the container with very warm, but not hot, water. As warm as you can comfortably hold your wrists in, is about right. This should bring them out in 15 minutes. If it doesn't, then you picked the stem while it was still too tightly closed! And the moral of that is, it's a good idea to practice on a couple of early stalks to learn just how near to opening they should be to be handled this way. It is a bit of a nuisance to do all this, but not nearly as bad as cutting stems in bloom and having them snag on each other and tear, or get caught on something else, and tear, or come out of the house or car into a wind, and TEAR! Or even worse, hold up nicely until the floor is cleared for judging, and then fold up.

On the other hand, if you are doing an arrangement, make it at home, if possible, set the arrangement in a cardboard box and pack it in well with crumpled newspaper so the container will not slip in the box, and drive carefully! If you must make the arrangement at the show-overnight trip, requirements of schedule, or other reasons-handle your flowers the same way and condition any foliage you are using equally well. Leaves, properly conditioned, can be carried in a closed plastic bag; branches can be rolled in a section of newspaper, dampened and put in a plastic bag, or pressed onto a pinholder in the bottom of a plastic wastebasket or pail, with a couple of inches of water. If the pinholder is properly and firmly fastened to the bottom of the carrier you can carry many kinds of flowers this way, including your iris, as long as you take care that they will not jostle against each other or the car. I have a pet wastebasket, rectangular in shape, which has three large holders fastened, at

the two ends of one long side and the middle of the other, all through the flower show season; it may have half a dozen glads at one end, a bunch of snaps at the other, and a fistful of iris leaves in the middle, with tissue paper separating the groups. The heavy lead holders plus two inches of water, give the load enough stability so it doesn't tip as long as I keep all four wheels on the ground going around corners.

It is wise, in bringing horticulture to shows, to bring two of everything-if a class calls for three of a kind, bring four. This allows for possible accidents. But be sure, before you leave the floor, that the extras have been removed. Two stems in a class for one not only won't help you to win, it probably will get your entry disqualified. And we wouldn't want that to happen, would we? Unless I'm in that show too. Also, before leaving the floor, check each exhibit carefully for the smallest imperfections; check to make sure you have it in its proper class; and if it is a standard show, make sure you don't have two entries in the same class unless the schedule specifically permits it in that class. In some small shows there may be only one class for all non-bearded iris, and you may in that case be permitted to have several entries, as long as each is a different species, or even just a different color of the same species. If you can't tell for sure from the schedule, that, my friend, is what the classification clerk is supposed to be doing, so make her (him) put down the bottle of pop and give a verdict.

After you have made sure that each exhibit is as nearly perfect as you can get it, get off the floor and let the judges do their work. Everyone will be hanging around outside, or having a quick lunch in the nearest dogwagon or cafeteria; join them and start promoting the Siberian Section of the show. There are two things you can say, either "You must see the Siberians; the tables are loaded with lovely blooms and I don't know how the judges will ever decide" or "When we're let in again, take a good look at the Siberians; it's really a shame there are so few, when they are so lovely". Either way, you are planting the idea of the Siberian iris in the heads of your fellow exhibitors, and maybe next year (as we used to say in Brooklyn).

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DUES - DUES - DUES

Please don't forget that it will soon be time to pay your
1962 DUES - Please send them to either Dr. William G.
McGarvey, R D #3, Oswego, N. Y. OR Mrs. John Withers,
26 Flint Avenue, Lakeland, Florida --until March 1, 1962,
after that date to Route 1, Box A-10, Mandan, N. Dak.

Research Committee Report
 SOURCES FOR SEEDS OF SIBERIAN IRIS SPECIES.
 Irene Van De Water

<u>Iris Species</u>	<u>Source</u>
Bulleyana	Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh 3, Scotland
	Universitets Botaniske Have Kobenhavn, Copenhagen, Denmark
Chrysographes	Royal Botanic Gardens
	Thompson & Morgan Ipswich, England
Clarkei	Thompson & Morgan
	The Scottish Rock Garden Club Attn: Mrs. C.E. Davidson Linton Muir West Linton, Peeblesshire, Scotland
Delavayi	Thompson & Morgan
	Royal Botanic Gardens
	The Scottish Rock Garden Club
Dykesii	Pearce Seed Company Morrestown, New Jersey
Forrestii	Thompson & Morgan
	Pearce Seed Company
Phragmitetorum	Not offered
Prismatica	Thompson & Morgan
	The Scottish Rock Garden Club
Sanguinea (orientalis)	Hortus Botanicus Medio-lanensis Vis Guisepe Colombo 60 Milano 443, Italy

It would be very desirable to have as many people as possible grow these species from seed. The seedling blooms should be carefully studied and compared in order to see how much variation there might be in each species, and also, in species grown from seeds obtained from different sources.

To add to the scanty knowledge that we have at present re-
regarding these species, it would be well to record the following
observations about each of the species grown:

Name of species (correctly identified)

Approximate height (in inches)

Colors and/or color patterns

Flower shape and size

Standards - erect or inclined

Falls - horizontal or drooping

Style arms - prominent

Buds

Number usual in socket

Color

Leaves

Length and breadth

Color

Habit - upright or reclining

Dormant or evergreen

Stem

Size

Shape

Solid or hollow

Branched or not

Pods and Seeds

Shape

Color

Size

Abundance

Germination

Place of origin

Type of soil

Hardiness

Floriferousness

Dates of first and last blooms

Another line of attack for recording the results of these seeds
would be to take clear, close-up kodachromes of the plants and blooms.
There are so few of these slides in existence at the present that the
field is wide open for anyone who wishes to become an authority in
this group of iris.

ARE TWO HEADS ALWAYS BETTER THAN ONE?

A Discussion of the Need for Certain Essentials in our Standards For Judging Siberian Irises

A recent experience sharpened my awareness of the need for discussion of and, it is to be hoped, the eventual development of consensus concerning minimum standards for judging Siberian irises. The experience was the result of an invitation which I accepted to be the speaker at a meeting of a relatively large group of sophisticated irisarians from a neighboring AIS Region. My subject was "Judging Irises" and my talk was illustrated with slides. A portion of the talk concerned siberians and as evidence of poor form, slides of half a dozen siberian seedlings having four falls were shown. The statement was made that all of these monstrosities had been destroyed after their pictures were taken. Two members of my audience registered disapproval and stated that they have been hybridizing to obtain this very characteristic. This surprised me.

Since I had invited questions and comments during the course of my talk, and because I am well aware of the fact that personal taste must be taken into consideration in any discussion of what makes for good form or beauty, I was not surprised by a disagreement with my point of view. However, I was surprised by the idea of trying to breed for irises with four falls since this is so clearly a characteristic out of keeping with the most fundamental characteristic of the iris flower.

The iris blossom is above all else, a flower having parts arranged in a pattern of threes. The iris with four falls, like the calf with two heads, has had its symmetry destroyed.

It would seem logical that the Society for Siberian Iris must be prepared to take a stand in defense of this flower to which we give our special attention. Furthermore, it would seem that whatever standards are developed by the Society to assist in making judgments on the virtue of new varieties they must include one which denies approval to distortions of fundamental characteristics.

It would seem to be our responsibility to develop standards which, in application, give approval to new varieties when they are demonstrably better in some way than older varieties; but which are equally useful in causing approval to be withheld from those which are presented solely because they are strangely different.

Beyond the emphasis on threeness, which the siberian shares with all irises, there is an airy grace about this flower which attracted us to it in the first place. The Society can ill afford to allow this latter characteristic to be lost in encouraging hybridizers to breed for bigness for the sake of bigness, nor can it afford to allow loss of the characteristic by encouraging development of forms which will cause the siberian to look like some other flower. (The mutant monger might be pleased with a chrysanthemum shaped siberian but the Society must reject it.)

Some few individuals may feel that a set of standards which denies approval to freaks will interfere with their rights to make money by selling such freaks. In actual fact such rights cannot be reduced by action of a non-governmental society - the mutant monger will still be able to sell-but it is to be hoped that one result of a set of good standards will be a sharp reduction in the number of buyers.

Because the Society has been given the responsibility for custody of the Siberian iris, and because - by accepting custody - it has assumed a responsibility to the gardening public, it is obligated to develop standards which will maintain and improve garden siberians while at the same time guarding against their unwarranted distortion.

Dr. William G. McGarvey

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Board of Directors
and
Executive Committee Report

Through the use of Robins the committees listed on Page 22 of this issue of the Siberian were appointed. There still are openings on several of the committees to be filled. If you are willing to serve on a committee please inform the president or secretary of your willingness. Three Honorary members and one foreign corresponding member were also appointed.

One regulation was voted on, that dues paid after October 1st shall be applied to the following year, new members will not be eligible to vote in current year's elections or receive current year's publications.

Charlotte Withers, Secretary

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ARE YOU PLANNING TO ATTEND THE 1962 AIS MEETING?

If you are planning to attend the 1962 AIS meeting in Kansas City, will you please notify our Publicity Chairman, Mrs. Mildred R. Johnson, 2275 Kensington Avenue, Salt Lake City 8, Utah. We want to be sure to meet you and become acquainted. Let's try to have a good group in attendance.

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DO YOU REMEMBER ----- ?

After your bag was packed with all of the items you felt you had to take along to the American Iris Society Annual Meeting in Newark you discover that such absolute necessities as Rain Dears are forgotten in the closet at home. I had been warned that the committee on arrangements and the weather man were usually not on speaking terms as to the proper date for the AIS meetings, the weather man probably of the opinion that all of these people should stay home and get those flower beds in apple-pie order for the coming display of lovely irises in their own gardens. After all, you can see pictures of all the newest and best iris in the dozens of iris catalogues put out by dozens of growers, true to color, with eloquent descriptions, parentage to the fourth degree and its possibilities as a parent in days to come. But still -- off we go to the convention city.

The last time I had traveled on a train was way back when father was a railroad man and we rode on a "pass". Needless to say trains have changed considerably since then. Now we have a small private sleeping room, complete with facilities, dine leisurely in a dining car with every service at our command, then return to the "Vista Dome" car and watch miles of spring-green landscape slide by as we traveled 300 miles down the Mississippi River valley. Change from one train to another in Chicago, without leaving the station, spend waiting time in the idle speculation as to where ALL those people come from and where they are going. Visit with a nice elderly woman, traveling alone from one daughter to another (she had eight children scattered over the U.S.) now heading home to California for a short time to see how her garden was growing under the care of strange hands.

You arrive in Newark in the afternoon of the day before the meeting, register in the Hotel Robert Treat, look around hopefully to see if possibly you will see a familiar face from the Portland meeting. No such luck. Well, there is time to take a stroll and spot a nice "open at 6:00 A.M." restaurant close to the hotel. (You remember the mad scramble to get an eye-opening cup of coffee and some breakfast at the Hotel Benson in Portland.) With this cafe located only two doors from the hotel you return to the lobby to find other early arrivals getting settled for the week to come. You gradually introduce yourself to others and find they are from Georgia, Texas, California, Iowa, etc. You watch a very well prepared display on hybridizing being set up on the balcony overlooking the lobby. You get your envelope with all the propaganda which usually comes in this envelope, this time it includes tickets to here and there in New York City. Thus endeth the first day!

Those busses leave awfully early in the morning - good thing you checked on the cafe two doors from the hotel. On the bus, of which there were six this year, you sit down, any place you wish to, you will get a different seat partner every time if you are smart and so become acquainted with new faces, sections of the country and find that each person has his or her own ideas as to type of iris he or she prefers to grow - tall bearded, dwarf, intermediate, spuria, Jap, and, oh yes, SIBERIANS!

I wont go into detail about the gardens, irises, and so on for I know you have read wonderful articles covering all of this information in the AIS Bulletin but let's talk about some of those things which stay in our minds and hearts long after the meeting is a thing of the past. For instance, -----

DO YOU REMEMBER the wonderful view from the windows of the Spring Brook Country Club where we had luncheon one day? Are you the man who took pictures carefully, using the light meter, etc., only to discover when you went to change the film -- NO FILM IN THE CAMERA? I know just how the fellow felt--it has happened to me too.

DO YOU REMEMBER how wonderful the coffee and rolls tasted at Presby Gardens when you went into Mrs. Walther's home after a session in the chilly, misty weather looking over those beds of wonderful -big buds - few blossoms? I finally ended up in the kitchen washing out a few cups to get my hands warm again. I shared this little job with a RVP who was going at it as tho she had served on many a committee (KP that is). The second trip to Presby found us again being served refreshments, this time out in the garden under wonderful old trees and surrounded by lovely flower beds.

DO YOU REMEMBER the odd whistles used by the Bus Captains to call their flocks together? And how we hated to hear the summons, hanging back like reluctant school children to the very last call!

Did you see the wonderful floral arrangements in the Walther home, one in shades of pink and rose. The other on the piano in lavender and white. The thrill of looking over the copy of Dykes' THE GENUS IRIS. All the chit-chat with people from all over the country. One thing I like about a smaller group of people attending these meetings, everyone has a chance to meet and become acquainted with everyone else.

Not wishing to miss a chance to pass the WORD along about the benefits of belonging to the Society for Siberian Iris, Peg and I approached everyone in sight or within sound of our voice. One woman had joined and as a good crusader, she suggested to her friend that she also join. Asked about dues she said they were \$1.50 - well, finally finding out that the dues were only \$1.00 the second woman asked about this and she said, 'Well you wont begrudge me my commission, will you?'

Do you remember - - yes, I do and I'm sure you do too. We all will for some time to come. It was fun and well worth the work we had to do when we finally got back to our own iris gardens. So why don't you plan to attend at least one of the AIS meetings when it is in your area. You go home with ideas fairly popping out all over and inspired to grow a few different iris, some you aren't accustomed to growing. If you had seen all the lovely Siberians we did (even though I had to walk in the creek to get a camera bugs view of them) at Presby Gardens you would be busy reading the iris catalogues and making a list for future orders. Lovely to look at, delightful to know and heaven to arrange! That's the Siberian iris.

Charlotte Withers

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

You are holding the second issue of The Siberian Iris; if you haul out the first issue, you can see what we have accomplished. HOW we did it is another story. I'm not sure that I can tell it very well. Last March, April and early May I was too busy reading, writing, switching paragraphs around, sending letters to Charlotte, Sarah and Irene, and getting letters from them, and from others, to have any real idea what the results were going to be. When Charlotte sent me the finished copy, I was pleasantly surprised. I guess things always look nicer in print - certainly nicer than in my horrible scrawl!

This issue was under a handicap the other didn't have. I was ambling along in my leisurely (read: lazy) way figuring on getting things to Charlotte by Thanksgiving, maybe, when she wrote me, about October 1st, that she was going to be away all winter and this would have to be in the mail by mid November! So this issue has been assembled sort of in haste and under pressure of the calendar; and if you haven't been in this spot you have no idea how heavy those few sheets of paper can become. As I write this, not all Committee reports have come in; some may arrive too late. They will appear in our next issue. For which we will give immediate notice: Deadline May 1.

Dear and Gentle Reader, please don't feel that if you aren't a literary genius you can't write for The Siberian Iris. You have only to look this over to shake that notion. If you think you have something to communicate to other Siberian growers or hybridizers, write it down and send it to me. If it is possible to use it as written, it will go in; if it needs a bit of pruning to fit the space available, we will prune it gently. If putting it in will mean adding the sheet of paper that will up the postage to the next bracket we will hold it for a future issue or return it to you, as you prefer; and if it roughly duplicates a portion of a longer article we will extract any remarks that conflict with the ideas in that article, and use these as a note appended to the article, with due credit to you. If you know what you want to say but don't know the best way to put it, send us your rough notes and we will try to arrange them to best effect; in this case please send them to me early so we can correspond about the article, and make sure we have written what you meant to say. But for Pete's sake, kids, if you have even a germ of an article, don't just say 'But I can't write' and skip the whole thing. We would welcome letters to the Editor, asking questions or suggesting articles you would like to see. Charlotte and I are very much beginners on this job, and we need all the help you can give us. With it, maybe we can make this a really GOOD publication.

Peg Edwards

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance Forward	\$34.00
Dues Received	<u>46.00</u>
Total	80.00
Disbursements:	
Expenses for The Siberian Iris	<u>9.50</u>
Balance as of October 24, 1961	\$70.50

NORTHERN NOTES

It is my belief that too many people are still under the impression that gardening in the northern tier of states is a life of hardship so far as the weather is concerned. They feel the summer season is too short to raise many of those flowers and flowering shrubs listed in the catalogues as "hardy in the temperate zone". However, as the years go by we who live here and have lives here for a period of years, are proving that through the use of a little common sense at the time of selecting our plants and shrubs, location for planting and methods of planting, we can raise a wider selection of plants than thought possible a few years ago. This theory has been proven again and again here in North Dakota, especially here in the central area where we are on the south edge of one climate zone and just north of another.

It is wise to provide a little winter protection for newly set plants and irises the first year after planting if planted in the open garden, none being necessary if planted in beds protected by buildings or the lee side of a hedge. We find also that many plants are hardier if started from seed rather than the plant divisions.

The following simple rules are those I have followed here in central North Dakota:

1. Prepare the ground to be used for new iris well in advance, adding fertilizer and spading deeply. Shape beds to allow for a certain amount of drainage (occasional heavy rains do not always drain away or become absorbed into the soil readily in this area.)
2. When ordering iris or other plants try to buy from a grower who grows in somewhat similar weather conditions. Although I have bought from as far away as Texas and had very good luck, I still feel it is wiser to try to buy acclimated rhizomes.
3. Order your iris as early as possible. The list of iris I intend to order is usually made up shortly after receiving the catalogues early in the year. It seems to me the more you study and try to decide - the more likely you are to end up with the ones you first had on your "wish I had" list. By planting early too, you allow the iris to become well established and consequently more able to withstand an unfavorable winter.
4. In selecting material for winter protection of your iris beds use material free from weed seed and not apt to mat and smother your iris. Coarse hay - we call it "prairie hay" - has proven to be very good here where we have strong winds during the winter months. It collects the snow and so creates a good ground cover.
5. In the spring uncover by gradual stages. That is, don't rashly strip off all of the winter cover some nice warm day

just because it is a nice warm day. Take a little of the cover off, wait a week or so and, if the weather is still favorable, remove some more of the cover. Leave a light layer in between the rows to use as a mulch and to walk on. (Sorry, I have to 'garden in rows' where my iris are concerned.) Of course the iris in the flower beds receive a modified version of this same procedure.

6. Last, but not least, when your Siberian iris and other types of irises are in bloom be generous with your friends, neighbors and share the beauty that your labors have produced. By all means, don't forget to take some pictures of those lovely blooms so that when the weather is a little on the dreary side months from that day in May or June you can again enjoy the sight of those tall, graceful blossoms.

Charlotte Withers

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PUBLICITY COMMITTEE REPORT

As Publicity Chairman for the Society for Siberian Iris I am anxious to obtain names of Gardening Editors in various areas of the United States. I should appreciate a card from you Siberian enthusiasts telling me where I can contact these people in your area.

I am working on an article describing methods of drying (preserving) Siberian iris for arrangements. This will be accompanied by pictures, and is scheduled to appear in our local Salt Lake Tribune Home Section sometime next June. This article will then be available for publication elsewhere, and I am looking for local newspapers, gardening publications, etc. in which to use it.

It isn't too early to be thinking about the Denver Convention in 1963 either, and we will want to be well represented in the Siberian Section. Since their dates will be well behind most of us, we should be able to show many Siberians otherwise not available.

Mildred J. Johnson

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S L I D E S

Again a plea for slides for a set of Siberian Iris slides to be available for rental through the Society for Siberian Iris. We feel the use of slides is one of the very best ways to promote and publicize these lovely iris. We will pay for these slides at the same rate as the Slide Committee of the American Iris Society. Take an extra slide for us next spring and help to advertize the Siberian iris.

AWARDS 1961

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Honorable Mention

Violet Flare (Cassebeer)
Blue Brilliant (Cassebeer)
Blue Moon (Mrs. E. Scheffy)
Silver Tip (Mrs. F. Cleveland)

High Commendation

Velvet Night (Peg Edwards)

Again we will repeat -- Any Siberian iris that has been introduced in 1960 or before (no matter how long before) is eligible for Honorable Mention. Those introduced during 1961 will be eligible for Honorable Mention in 1962.

Any Siberian iris that has not been introduced, whether it is under number or has been registered under a name, is eligible for High Commendation.

THESE ARE NOW ELIGIBLE FOR THE MORGAN AWARD:

Martha Le Grand	1936
Snow Crest	1936
Cool Spring	1951
Royal Ensign	1953 and 1958
White Swirl	1957