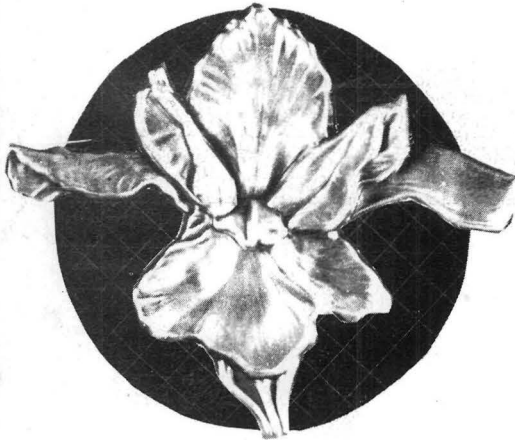


The
Siberian
Iris



Volume 6
Number 6
Fall 1987

THE SIBERIAN IRIS

Volume 6, Number 6

Fall 1987

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THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Congratulations are certainly due to Judy Hollingworth on her first issue. It was perfectly marvelous. From what I know of this issue in advance of publication, Judy must have six pairs of hands. Can you imagine moving a home, family and several thousand plants while putting this issue of TSI to bed? Judy did.

I have heard from Helen Jones, 1612 W. Park Place, Oklahoma City, OK 73106. Helen reports that the 1988 National Convention will be May 3 to 7, 1988. The Society for Siberian Iris meeting is scheduled for 12:00 on Wednesday May 4th. A room assignment is not yet available, nor is the time and place of the board meeting. Anna Mae Miller will be starting to put together the program for the membership meeting. It is always difficult to find a suitable idea and even more difficult to find a speaker for the meeting. Any suggestions? she would appreciate hearing from you. Her address is 6065 N. 16th St. Kalamazoo, MI 49007.

The iris Steve Varner won the Morgan-Wood medal for 1987, Congratulations to Harley Briscoe. (see article p.17)

The Spring issue and this issue of TSI are being mailed first class as voted by the board in Phoenix. Using the Not for Profit permit, the postage is \$.08 each, first class for the last too issues was \$.58 each. The average delivery time for the Not for Profit is about 3 weeks. Based on the results of the first class mailing, the average was 7 to 9 days. Sure hope the two week difference in delivery time was worth the \$.48 per copy difference. For the entire membership, this came to over \$200.00.

Jim Foreman.

REPORT ON THE 1987 SSI BOARD MEETING

Ruth Wilder - Secretary

The Board meeting of the Siberian Section of the American Iris Society was held at The Point in Phoenix, Arizona on Wednesday April 15, 1987 at five thirty in the afternoon. Anna Mae Miller, Vice President had charge of the meeting in the absence of the President, James Foreman.

The 1986 minutes were read and approved.

Treasurer's report was read by Mrs. Miller. Gunther Stark, treasurer was unable to attend the meeting. We have 514 members in the section currently.

Harry Kuesel proposed that the next two issues of The Siberian Iris be mailed by first class mail since there has been a delay in the mailing of the last two issues. Motion was seconded and passed.

Carolee Clay has resigned as editor of TSI. Judy Hollingworth has accepted the appointment as editor. She needs articles for TSI from members-growers as well as hybridizers.

A discussion of a membership listing brought a decision to issue a complete listing every three years, with new members or deletions to be printed in each issue. Barney Hobbs moved, Harry Kuesel seconded, and motion passed.

As to the status of the Encyclopedia or Check List, it is all set to be published except for some drawings and should be ready soon.

Report on book sales of the Siberian Iris show that 155 copies have been sold in the past year. Most of these copies have been sold to book stores with a receipt of \$605.70.

Agnes Waite reported on Registrations and Awards. A total of fourteen hybridizers registered or introduced Siberian irises in 1986. Four of these were from overseas. Twenty eight Siberians were registered with eleven from overseas members. Twenty three varieties were introduced with ten of these being from overseas. It should also be noted that in 1986 no Siberian seedling won a High Commendation Award. The Honorable Mention awards

dropped from thirteen in 1985 to eight in 1986.

There was no nominee for Distinguished service award.

Anna Mae Miller reported that there are four robins flying presently. One member has been dropped due to his dropping his AIS membership. Two new members have been added to flights, one from Switzerland and one from Chile.

In the report from Dr. Hollingworth on research, two projects are currently in progress: The possible substitution of Treflan for colchicine, as a safer and more accessible method of inducing tetraploidy, and the development of a method for propagating Siberians by tissue culture.

A report on Presby Gardens was given by Dr. McEwen. A report was published in the January, 1987 AIS Bulletin.

A recommendation that White Swirl be considered for the AIS Board of Director's Award was well received. Anna Mae Miller will send this letter of recommendation to the AIS board.

A listing of commercial gardens has been requested by some new members. One will be sent to Gunther Stark to include in new member letters.

Meeting adjourned.

NOTES FROM THE ROBINS

Compiled by : Anna Mae Miller

Siberian Robin G2 had some comments that might interest others:

Virginia Heller M1:

"The conventional wisdom is to fall plant. I'm beginning to wonder if it's in the plants' best interest really. Perhaps the rule was promulgated by commercial considerations, the nurserymen wanting to get as much increase as possible before digging and separating. I recall the struggle my Siberians - Indy, Windwood Spring, Mabel Coday, Pink Haze etc. had to establish themselves, taking three winters and two full summers before they bloomed and began to clump. Yet when Calvin Helsley (Pres No. Am. Lily Soc.) came to teach a lily judging course in June he brought Blue Kaleidescope and planted it and it took immediately and became my first Siberian ever to bloom the first year after planting. The piece of Blue Kaleidescope planted three falls ago is still struggling and hasn't bloomed yet. All the Siberians planted fall of '86 are still struggling.....

My Siberians were fantastic this year! I fell in love with Dance Ballerina Dance (much nicer 2nd year). It seemed to have more pink this year - still it's really only lavender with a pinkish tint. Lavender Bounty was also excellent (some stalks had six buds) and will need dividing every third year to keep an unmuddled clump. Shirley Pope was beautiful, what a stunning clump! It was a mass of dark purple with the bright white signal. It was my favorite this year (my favorites change each year). Teal Velvet was another outstanding one. A stalk of it won Best Siberian and was a contender for Best of Show at our show. Some clumps of irises fell all over the place stalks and all, don't remember that they did that in past years.

Larry Westfall PA:

You must remain a member of both SSI and SJI. Both are organizations that we must support even though at times it seems we aren't receiving a lot of information. Both are put together by volunteers and at times problems arise that take time and considerable effort to straighten out. I

think this is what happened to SSI. But since Judy Hollingworth has taken over the bulletin now, better things are on the horizon.

Dr. Fred Schlegel, Casilla 135, Valdivia, Chile is virtually the only Siberian, Japanese and Pcn iris grower in that country and feels the soil and weather are the most ideal in the world. He really appreciates seeds from named iris, and if you made too many crosses to plant he would put them to good use. Importing plants is difficult. Fred is in charge of the arboretum at Universidad Austral De Chile.

=====

SIBERIANS IN POTS

(Personal communication George D. Slade to Anna Mae Miller).

In my robin letter I did not go into great detail as to how I handle Siberians in pots. As soon as growth starts (1 to 2 inches), I dig the clumps and divide. I then plant them in garden soil in 7 1/2" black plastic pots. When the soil settles in the pots it should be 1 1/2 to 2" from the top of the pot so as to catch ample water. The pots are then placed on the ground, (not on wood, masonry, or concrete) and soaked daily with water from a garden hose. By bloom time the pots will be filled with roots and a large percentage will bloom.

When our customers get them we advise them to turn the pot over, catch the clump of soil and iris, plant a couple of inches deeper than they were growing in the pots and water well. We have been doing this for years with excellent results, no need for staking.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A VISIT TO THE BRUMMITTS

By Jennifer Hewitt

Reading Currier's account of the parentage behind Butter and Sugar in TSI for Spring 1987, I was reminded of a visit I made to the Brummitt garden in Banbury, England, in my early days of iris growing. Sad to say (dare I admit it?) my interest then was in Tall Bearded and most of the visit was devoted to looking at Leonard Brummitt's speciality. But as we walked back towards the gate en route for the house and a cup of tea, Marjorie showed me her bed of Siberians, which as I recall it, had a number of clumps growing together in an area about 9 feet by 6 feet. Part of the reason for veiling them may have been her wish to extend my knowledge and enthusiasm, in which she succeeded, but it took several years for me to see the light! However, I remember a short discussion about the naming of a new seedling, and the fact that, as it was more or less intermediate in colour between Cambridge and Dreaming Spires which were growing in the same bed, and possibly next to each other, (which is where this ties in with Currier's speculation as to whether Cambridge could have been the pollinator for the bee-set Dreaming Spires seed sent to him by Marjorie). I suggested the name might have a link with London University, as it is midway-give or take a diversion or two-between Oxford and Cambridge. However I think the eventual name was Sea Horse which was registered in 1972.

This visit took place in either 1968 or '69; I can't recall exactly, but our daughters, now 21 and 22 were very small, and while Leonard and Marjorie took me round and inspired me, my husband Peter kept the girls happy on the swings in the recreation ground. The Brummitts' main iris growing area, was a half acre, rented from the town council, about 1/4 mile from their house, and next to the recreation ground.

It also had a hockey pitch, and there is a "might have been": I began my working life as a teacher and from 1959-61 taught in Banbury, at a school which had only tennis courts on site. In winter I used to walk with classes of girls about a mile from the school to this very same "Rec." for hockey lessons. In summer the girls played tennis at the school, if only we'd played hockey in summer, surely I'd have seen the glorious display of irises through the gate and might have got

hooked earlier..... but at least I have my Brummitt memory. By 1977, when I visited again, the Siberians had been moved from that bed and were, if I remember rightly, not planted close together as before.

1987 AIS AWARDS

MORGAN-WOOD MEDAL

105 votes: Steve Varner (H. Briscoe)

runners-up

93 Ruffled Velvet (C. McEwen)
75 Pink Haze (W. McGarvey)

AWARD OF MERIT

65 votes Dance Ballerina Dance (S. Varner)
47 Omar's Cup (B. Hager)
45 Harbor Mist (K. Waite)

runners-up

39 King of Kings (S. Varner)
35 Dancing Nanou (A. Miller)
32 Kismet (S. Varner)
31 Creme Chantilly (C. McEwen)
31 Lavender Bounty (C. McEwen)

HONORABLE MENTION

60 votes Jamaican Velvet (W. McGarvey)
50 Mabel Coday (C. Helsley)
37 Wizardry (R. Hollingworth)
29 Illini Flirt (S. Varner)
25 Janet K. Merrill (H. Briscoe)
24 Windwood Spring (R. Hollingworth)
22 Pink Sparkle (B. Hager)
19 Polly Chism (H. Briscoe)
19 Star Glitter (B. Hager)
18 Demure Illini (S. Varner)
16 Bedford Lass (K. Waite)

REPORT ON THE 1987 SSI MEMBERS'
FAVORITE 15 POLL

First I want to thank everyone who returned their ballots. We had responses from 20 states, the District of Columbia and 4 foreign countries, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, and the USSR. The most amazing statistic to me was that 193 Siberians were named including several species and 40 chromosome cultivars. I wouldn't have believed there would be so many varieties represented, it is certainly testimony to the hardiness and vigor of the species. Because so many irises were "favorites" we are printing, besides The Favorite 15, The Second 15 (sounds like a rugby team!) if you don't see your favorite here and didn't take the time to vote, be sure to do so next year.

THE FAVORITE 15	SECOND 15
1. BUTTER AND SUGAR	18. HARPSWELL HAZE
2. RUFFLED VELVET	LADY VANESSA
3. PINK HAZE	SILVER ILLUSION
4. EGO	21. EWEN
SUPER EGO	KING OF KINGS
6. SHIRLEY POPE	SILVER EDGE
7. TEMPER TANTRUM	VIOLET JOY
WHITE SWIRL	25. DANCING NANOU
WING ON WING	FORREST MCCORD
•	HARBOR MIST
10. ANNIVERSARY	JANET K. MERRILL
CAMBRIDGE	LAUGHING BROOK
STEVE VARNER	SWANK
13. JAMAICAN VELVET	TEALWOOD
JAYBIRD	WIZARDRY
15. CHILLED WINE	
DEAR DIANNE	
WINDWOOD SPRING	

Now follows Katharine Steele's thoughtful choice of her favorite Siberians, giving the reason for choosing each one.

SIBERIANS: A BAKER'S DOZEN

By Katharine Steele

Those of us who grow many Siberian irises take our growing space for granted and even find a bit more space in the garden each year to add a few more. Last year I added twelve. Some were newer introductions and some were old reliables. The introduction dates ranged from NORA DISTIN (Perry, '23) to LADY VANESSA (Hollingworth, '86) a sixty three year span. That could be the theme for this article: "The Enduring Siberian Cultivars", but it isn't.



My Love (Scheffy '49)

Photo: Katharine Steele

As I contemplate the garden space here and see some of our friends moving into less demanding smaller retirement homes or condos, I wonder if that were Richard and me and we should have a limited gardening space, and so must choose just twelve or so Siberians, which ones would make the list? For this very hypothetical situation, I will choose very carefully. I will want the longest possible blooming season so I will want some early, mid season, and late varieties. I realise that by doing this I will automatically eliminate some that would otherwise surely be included. I will also place a lot of importance on varying the colors,

heights, blossom size and form. Uniqueness, floriferousness and hardiness of the plants are also important. Today these are the Siberians I will choose based on my own garden experience.

MY LOVE (Scheffy '49). Medium blue, extra early, 24".

Tremendous number of blossom stalks per clump. Branched with four buds per stalk. It's lovely, showy and a reliable repeat bloomer.

SUMMER SKY (Cleveland '35). Pale blue with yellow hafts and prominent creamy style arms, early, 30".

Hundreds of small flowers with a delicate appearance flit in the slightest breeze. One clump growing by a large piece of driftwood would be a pleasing placement.

BLUE BURN (McGarvey, '68). Light blue self with style arms almost white, early, 32".

This is an outstanding lighter blue. I choose it because it is another early one and it has the very pleasing look of sky and meadow.

EGO (McGarvey, '66). Blue self with paler style arms, mid season, 32".

This is a most prolific bloomer with numerous stalks. The 4 1/2" flowers have very wide standards and the falls are ruffled. This 1972 Morgan Award winner is a very popular Siberian, and I would confirm this by using two plants, perhaps to anchor each side of the garden gate.

PINK HAZE (McGarvey, '80). Pink, mid season, 38".

This is the clearest, purest light pink we have, and presents nice color contrast in flower and foliage. It increases very well but expect the flowers to be their best the third year. This very popular cultivar won the Morgan Award in 1984.

VI LUIHN (DuBose, '74). Deep violet self with pale yellow signal, mid season, 34".

Terminal buds and two branches allow for three open flowers at a time per stem. The branching gives the plant a very pleasing mass arrangement look. Let's plant this one near an in-ground bird bath and enjoy the reflection as well. It's another Morgan Award winner, this time in 1977.

SPARKLING ROSE (Hager, '68). Rose-mauve self, mid season, 38".

Varying stalk heights and hafts of gold and

white with violet veining contribute to the airy look of this Siberian. We can grow this to the back of our space, and it will still command our attention.

PERRY'S PIGMY (Perry, 1912---believe it!). Medium violet blue with veined falls, mid season, 32".

The pigmy part of its name comes from the 2 1/2" flowers. It has low narrow foliage and more stems per clump than anything else I grow. The stems are branched, usually five buds per stem. You can cut your party bouquet from this one and never miss the ones you cut from the clump.

BUTTER AND SUGAR (McEwen, '77). Yellow and white, mid season, 27".

This beauty has white standards with greenish-yellow veins and falls that are butter yellow, also with greenish-yellow veins. The 4 1/2" flowers are on stems that vary in height making a very beautiful natural arrangement. This lower growing, prolific bloomer gives us another plant for the foreground. It is especially nice to have a Siberian to add a warm hue to the palette. Butter and Sugar is the deserving winner of the 1986 Morgan- Wood Medal.

ILLINI CHARM (Varner '75). Light wine and lilac with white signal blaze, early to late, 24".

The special fresh quality of this color combination is accentuated with good bud count and a long bloom season. This one also gets a placement to the front. Let's give it a white or blue backdoor neighbor and see it glow!

RUFFLED VELVET (McEwen, '73). Velvety reddish purple, mid to late blooming, 30".

The dark richness of the large 4 1/2" flowers is further enhanced with heavy ruffling and wide petals. Many blossoms are open at one time. When you see this outstanding Siberian you know why it was the 1980 Morgan Award winner.

SHIRLEY POPE (McEwen '79). Vibrant reddish-purple with white signals, mid to late, 28".

This child of Ruffled Velvet has 4 1/2" velvety textured, ruffled flowers. The white signals are a striking contrast to the dark petals. Very beautiful!

WING ON WING (McGarvey, '72). White self, late, 38" but it does not grow this tall for me.

With a ruffled, rounded flower form, this cultivar begins to bloom here in mid to late May. Just when the early varieties are gearing down, this one is gearing up with its crisp, creamy white flowers. There are many other very good whites, and if I could squeeze in one more plant it would be another white. I would suggest: WHITE SWIRL (Cassebeer, '57), a pure white self, mid season, 40", winner of the 1962 Morgan Award. LIMEHEART (Brummitt, '70), light green hafts, mid season, 38". ANNIVERSARY (Brummitt, '69), white with yellow hafts, mid season 30", winner of the British Dykes Medal, or LIGHTS OF PARIS (Rich, '67), white with deep yellow showy hafts, late, 40".

To review our selections, we have three early, six mid season and four later varieties. The colors include white, medium blue, light blue, pale blue/white, deep violet, pink, rose-mauve, reddish-purple, and yellow. The heights vary from 24" to 38", and the flower forms vary greatly. (I fervently hope that in always striving for better Siberian iris introductions, flower form is carefully considered by hybridizers; and that we promote all the good types of shapes and sizes. Some of the plants with excellent flower substance and large size just do not have the desirable quality of being able to flutter like butterflies in the breezes).

I trust you have helped me to visually place these selected plants in our imaginary pocket garden. The list is also intended to be a guideline or suggested list for any beginning Siberian iris grower. Most are not expensive and are readily available.

It is important to continue to observe and evaluate other cultivars, and I constantly do this. By the end of the 1987 bloom season there will likely be some new favorites, as newer plantings have become established clumps and bloom at their very best. Isn't this part of what makes gardening so interesting? There are no carbon copy years, and we have so many choices for how we will put our stamp of individuality into our own special space.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

THE SIBERIAN SEASON IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN
STATES

By Harry Kuesel

After seeing only one Siberian seedling (a pink one of Currier McEwen's) at the Phoenix convention, I was prepared for a poor bloom season here in Colorado. The season came early, about ten days ahead of normal.

The Denver Botanic Garden's rock alpine section where the Siberian species are grown under the expert guidance of Curator Panyotti Kelaidis, was a delight. Both the yellow *I. forrestii*, and the black *I. chrysographes* were outstanding. There was also the near species Blue Wilson of McGarvey and McEwen's Blue Forty, which are excellent, and at least six different clones of *I. sibirica*. He also has what we thought was *I. bulleyana* which probably came from Melrose Gardens but was later identified by Ben Hager and Roy Davidson as *I. grandis* (Barr 1912), a close *sibirica* derivative. (If any of our readers can help Panyotti find any other of the Siberian species, please write to him c/o Denver Botanic Gardens, 909 York St. Denver, Co 80206).

The Denver Botanic's Siberian Display Garden was torn up a year ago last summer. All the plants were actually dug in the spring and planted in pots, and then replanted in late June, so bloom was still sparse this year. The soil had been too alkaline and had to be replaced with mountain peat and acid soil mix. At any rate the 1987 bloom was on plants that had only been in the ground for one year, so could not be expected to be spectacular. Ruffled Velvet, Wing on Wing, Super Ego, and Pink Haze were perhaps the best. The last to bloom was Currier's fine white tetraploid Harpswell Happiness. Jim Archibald, a naturalist photographer from Great Britain happened to visit the gardens around June 10th and took a fine picture for the British Iris Society's Yearbook.

My own Siberian Display Garden in Littleton Colorado, about 20 miles further south, had excellent bloom. Outstanding were Currier's Lavender Bounty, Marshmallow Frosting, Shirley Pope, Creme Chantilly and Orville Fay. Steve Varner's Kismet and Ann Dasch. McGarvey's Pink Haze, Ego, Super Ego, Dewful, Augury, and Roanoke's Choice. Cassebeer's White Swirl and Violet Flare. Hollingworth's Wizardry, Bellagamba's Maggie Lee, Hager's Alter Ego,

Jaybird and Swank, and I. Grandis, and a blue form of I. wilsonii, which bloomed around May 15th - a full month ahead of my peak bloom. At Mary Cuthbert's garden in Englewood Colorado, I saw a fine clump of Butter and Sugar - AIS's first Morgan-Wood Medal winner from Currier McEwen. This was also around the middle of June which closed out our bloom season. I heard that Steve Varner's Invader bloomed well in Colorado Springs but did not get down in time to see it when it bloomed the last week of June. The high altitude down there compared to the Denver area, usually means about a week to ten days later Siberian bloom.



Steve Varner (Briscoe R. '76)

Photo: Bob Hollingworth



THE BACKGROUND OF
STEVE VARNER

By Harley Briscoe
Morgan-Wood Medal winner
1987.

Like many other hybridizers my Siberians have a strong infusion of White Swirl. Many years ago I bought four Siberians from Mr. Cassebeer and among them was White Swirl.

Besides the excellent seedlings it gave White Swirl was an excellent parent in that its pollen was almost sterile. When you pollinated it you were almost sure it was not selfed which occurred with many other varieties.

Steve Varner is a seedling from White Swirl X Barbara's Choice. Barbara's Choice is supposed to be a 40 chromosome, Steve Varner bought it from England. The plant he received was surely a 28 chromosome, and I got the pollen from Steve's plant. All the sibs. from the cross had wide parts, and one in particular had the widest falls I ever saw in a Siberian, but they hung straight down.

Many years ago (1977), I judged the Chicago Iris Show. I took a stalk of 70-53 B (Steve Varner) with me and put it on the receiving table for display. The show chairman entered it in the seedling class. It received twenty eight E.C. votes.

Nate Rudolph asked if I would guest it with him. It was in his garden many people saw it for the first time.

It was runner up for the Franklin-Cook award at two Conventions; St. Louis and Indianapolis, this was almost unheard of for a Siberian.

I have received reports from California, Oklahoma, New York, Arkansas, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Texas and Maine, that it grew and did well there.

As a breeder, its' pollen is very potent and physically easy to work with. Its' seedlings are inclined to be like itself, I have only one that I consider different and good enough to register.

* Medal awarded at the National Convention for the best Iris hybridized within the convention's region.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Since Barbara's Choice is registered as a 40 chromosome Siberian, then I think Steve Varner's parentage would have to be considered to be White Swirl X Unknown

Editor's note



Harley and Antoinette Briscoe

SEARCHING FOR A SIBERIAN IRIS?

By Howard Brookins

Is there a certain Siberian Iris on your "wish list", one you would like to add to your collection for sentimental reasons, or perhaps to enhance your collection for hybridizing purposes? Are you tired of writing letters to different sources, never to find that certain one? Well, for all members of the Siberian Iris Society an easier method is now available!

I have set up a computer database listing ALL Siberian iris registered / introduced using the Siberian Societies' 1975 Check List, the 1979 AIS Checklist, and the 1980 through 1986 Registration / Introduction Lists. and have added and continue to add all newer entries, plus those names in commerce but not official registered names. In addition I have written to all known sources of Siberian iris asking for their catalogs, and additional items they grow but do not list. As a result, I now have source listings for over 400 Siberian irises currently in commerce, nearly half of those ever registered. In addition, several hybridizers have given me additional information that certain varieties have been lost, or for some reason were not introduced.

As a service to all Siberian Iris Society members, for a self addressed stamped envelope, I will furnish a listing of all available sources for specific Siberian irises (limit of 10 per stamp on the envelope: if you request information on 11-21 include another stamp, etc.). With each request, I will include the latest listing of suppliers, showing if they are a FALL shipper ONLY, or for those of us in cold climates if SPRING shipping is available.

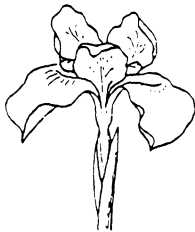
To continue to make my list of available Siberians as complete as possible, if you are a commercial source NOT listed in my source list please contact me so you may be included in my listings. Also if you have an "oldie" which you think is not currently in commerce, and you'd be willing to sell or trade with someone, let me know and I'll act as clearing house for those not available from a commercial source. If you introduce a new Siberian, drop a note to get your new variety on the available list.

When I feel this list of available named Siberians is complete, perhaps a complete listing

in TSI will be in order. Until then, send information or requests for information to:

Howard L. Brookins
N75 W14257 North Point Drive
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051-4325

SIBERIAN IRISES Postpaid \$7.00



By Currier McEwen; illustrated with color plates, drawings and monochrome; includes glossary of terms; prepared with help from committee of advisors and contributors from The Society for Siberian Irises. Proceeds from sale of books will be used to support the work of SSI.

Send order to: Julius Wadekamper, 15974 Canby Avenue, Route 5, Faribault, MN 55021. Make check payable to Society for Siberian Irises.

SIBERIANS FRONT AND CENTER

COLUMBUS, OHIO IRIS SOCIETY.

Best of Show - Silver Edge (McEwen '74)
Exhibited by Mrs. Howard Warrell.

REGION 6 SPRING MEETING:

Best iris hybridized in Region 6:
High Standards (Hollingworth '87)

Best iris hybridized outside Region 6:
White Swirl (Cassabeer '60).

THE ETHICS OF GUESTING

By Steve Varner

Hybridizers send their plants to future convention sites as guests for display. There are rules governing guests some of which are:

The guest plants and all increase remain the property of the sender and will be returned after the convention.

No plants will be used for breeding.

Care will be taken by host gardens to grow and display the guests to the best of the hosts' abilities.

Reports will be given at least annually on the guests' performance.

Another form of guesting exists between hybridizers, where the host but no others, is given permission for breeding privileges.

There are variations of these rules, but the problems for hybridizers come from flagrant violations of guesting rules by too many people. Any theft of plants is just that. On the bright side, there are some who follow the rules to the letter.

Hybridizers benefit from guesting by having their plants seen by a large number of flower enthusiasts, which can result in sales and votes for awards; by testing their plants in growing conditions probably different from their own; and possibly making new friends of the hosts.

The plant societies and their members loose when hybridizers will no longer risk their best plants as guests. It is wonderful to be able to see the newest registrations and numbered seedlings all growing in one area. I have supported plant societies' conventions for over three decades and have been "taken" too often. Others have told me of problems. We have to grow and bloom any returned guests to insure their identities before we can sell them. Hybridizers work long and hard for little financial gain.

Some plant societies ask for disposal instructions the year of the convention, often before the convention dates, listing options such as: Leave one plant with hosts.

Leave guest for the convention sponsoring club's auction.

Destroy all plants.

Return guest to hybridizer at his expense.

And the kicker I hate-- unless disposal

instructions are received by a certain date, all plants will be destroyed. The US mail is not infallible.

I ask for return of guested numbered seedlings if they have not been registered (or if I need stock) as I do not want them distributed under number. A registered plant has its description in the check list, but there is no way to determine a seedling's correct identity.

To illustrate what might be funny to some -- and maybe, even to me in a few years: For the 1985 Indy AIS convention, I guested some of my best Siberians with seven gardens, all handled by my friend Barney Hobbs. Indy had the finest display of Siberians of any convention that I have seen. Again, I requested return of numbered seedlings and got a lot of them. At their '85 fall banquet to which we were invited, we enjoyed their activities. After the meal, they auctioned many fine irises. I was high bidder for one of the Chartreuse Bounty plants offered. When it bloomed this spring, I saw this beautiful light and medium blue bitone, and I knew it could not be Chartreuse Bounty. They sold me one of my own numbered guests!

I had planned to introduce it , but now am undecided. Anyone else have a "funny story" to share?

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.



the last word

We have just completed the move of our family and our irises to Michigan. It has been quite an upheaval and without the help of good "iris friends" it would have been impossible. We would never have completed all the digging and planting of the more than two thousand plants before the fall. Please note the new editorial address.

Thanks to Shirley Pope for launching our ad. section in the Spring '87 issue. Please remember to send your ads for Spring '88; it's good value for money -- direct access to 514 Siberian lovers!

You probably noted in the minutes of the SSI board meeting, that the number of Siberian HM's dropped from 13 in 1985 to 8 in 1986. The high number in '85 was possibly due to the very successful national meeting in Indianapolis, where the organizers actively sought out Siberian guests, and the hosts and hostesses grew them superbly while featuring them prominently in their tour gardens. This year the HM's number 11, so things seem to be averaging out. Of more concern is that there were no HC's in 1986, suggesting that there was not one Siberian seedling worthy of introduction. Impossible! It therefore seems important (particularly in years such as 1987 when the National Convention is held in an area of the country unsuited to Siberian culture) that our judges get out and see new cultivars in hybridizer's gardens. Region 6 members were privileged to have James Rasmussen, President of AIS give them judges training at their Fall meeting and he emphasized the point that garden judging was THE most important duty of a judge.

Thanks to everyone for their kind comments about the Spring issue and the future of TSI. I am enjoying the honeymoon but I'm sure that along with many others in new jobs, I, sooner or later, will be found to have feet of clay

After this garden move Bob and I have made a pact never ever to do it again, but it was stimulating! One interesting observation while digging the Siberians on the 7th of September, was a seedling with two flowers in the base of the clump. They hadn't developed stalks but the flowers were perfectly formed - could this be the

start of true rebloomers? Anyone else observed this? I shall enjoy this winter freed from the garden, but come spring I know I'll be ready to go. That's the joy and promise of gardening.



advertisements

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