

The Siberian Iris



Fall 2001



THE SIBERIAN IRIS

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FRONT COVER: STRAWBERRY FAIR
(Hollingworth, 94). Photo by Bob Hollingworth

INSIDE FRONT COVER: Two views of the Warner Garden,
Upperco, Maryland. Both photos by Ginny Spoon of Virginia.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! Fall is a season to transplant, evaluate and look forward to bloom time next year.

Congratulations to Bob Hollingworth on receiving the Morgan-Wood Medal for STRAWBERRY FAIR. It is truly a distinctive iris.

This past year for SSI saw several changes. Our membership chairman, Howard Brookins was awarded the Society's Distinguished Service Award for the many years and many ways that he has served the Society. This was done by a unanimous vote at the annual board meeting.

The Society completed all the requirements to qualify for 501(c)(3) status, including passing of the bylaw revisions. Many thanks go to Dr. Roy Epperson and our treasurer, Jim Copeland, for preparing the necessary documents. This means that: (1) Members of SSI who itemize deductions on their IRS tax returns may now deduct any contributions (money or value of auction items) to SSI; (2) Officers and Committee Chairs who itemize deductions on their IRS tax returns may now deduct the cost of attendance at scheduled meetings of SSI, provided they are listed on the program agenda by name and title; (3) SSI can receive authorization to mail TSI and other materials at a reduced nonprofit rate. SSI is designated a 501(c) (3) entity as a subordinate organization under the umbrella of The American Iris Society. This has been accomplished at no cost to SSI. The AIS Board of Directors funded the application fee and Bob Plank worked in a pro bono capacity for The American Iris Society.

We are so fortunate to have Linda Doffek as our new membership chairman. Be be sure to address any renewals or address corrections to her and please consider renewing to a triennial membership to lighten her load.

It was marvelous to see so many guest Siberians in bloom for the national convention this year. Many of the hybridizers sent guest plants and bloom for the most part was excellent. Next year in Tennessee we also will have the opportunity to see Siberians as guests in the tour gardens, and of course we are all looking forward to our own convention scheduled for 2003 in Canada.

The Maryland State Highway Administration has its first landscape display bed of Siberian irises located in the median strip of Interstate 83. I have admired many such plantings while traveling in North Carolina and am looking forward to seeing how this one does here. 500 divisions of Tropic Night were planted in one block. This variety was chosen for its vigorous growth, excellent upright foliage, bloom height and late season display as the seed pods turn a golden color and then turn an deep rich mahogany. Treflan was used for pre-emergence weed control and will be reapplied yearly to keep seeds from germinating. If anyone knows of other such public plantings it would be nice to share the information.

Enjoy the more relaxed fall and winter pace as we all look forward to the new bloom season to come.

Carol Warner

AIS AWARDS FOR SIBERIANS FOR 2001

	<u>Hybridizer</u>	<u>Votes</u>
MORGAN-WOOD MEDAL		
STRAWBERRY FAIR	Robert Hollingworth	157
<i>Runners-Up:</i>		
LAKE KEUKA	Dana Borglum	103
HARPSWELL VELVET	Currier McEwen	53
AWARD OF MERIT		
CARELESS SALLY	M. Schaefer/J. Sacks	72
TRIM THE VELVET	M. Schaefer/J. Sacks	65
<i>Runners-Up:</i>		
CARMEN JEANNE	Calvin Helsley	56
BAND OF ANGELS	Robert Hollingworth	50
HONORABLE MENTION		
SOMEBODY LOVES ME	Robert Hollingworth	74
SHIPS ARE SAILING	M. Schaefer/J. Sacks	69
NEAT TRICK	John White	43
HARPSWELL SNOW	Currier McEwen	39
AT THE BALLET	Calvin Helsley	38
COUNTESS CATHLEEN	M. Schaefer/J. Sacks	38
<i>Runners-Up:</i>		
FLUTTER BY BUTTERFLY	Robert Hollingworth	35
LADY WALPOLE	M. Schaefer/J. Sacks	35

BEST OF SHOW AWARDS

The following Siberians irises were chosen Best Specimen at accredited American Iris Society shows in 2001. Congratulations to the exhibitors!

<u>Cultivar</u>	<u>Exhibitor</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
JEWELLED CROWN	James Brooks	Greenville, TN	5/12
SHAKER'S PRAYER	Mike Corle	Lebanon, PA	5/19
SWIRLING LAVENDER	Lynda Love	Denver, CO	6/ 3
SARAH TIFFNEY	Andrew Wheeler	Shelburne Falls, MA	6/10



These Siberian seedlings were voted exhibition certificates at accredited AIS shows in 2001.

<u>Hybridizer</u>	<u>Seedling</u>
Helsley, Calvin	01-05
Hollingworth, Robert	EMILY ANNE
Hollingworth, Robert	97C8B15 (Emily Anne)
Kermode, Cynthia	ReSi0101
Norrick, Jack	946-1
Pohlman, Neal	97-30-1
Ryan, James	1-T-3
Steele, Katharine	4-2701-12
Warner, Carol	6
Warner, Carol	10
Warner, Carol	11
Warner, Carol	12
Warner, Carol	14
Wendel, Brian	SIB 98-sa

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In Memoriam - Evelyn White

Evelyn Jones White, 84, died on July 27th at home in Minot, ME after a prolonged illness. She was instrumental in assisting her husband of 60 years, John White, in his hybridizing efforts. Evelyn kept meticulous records of John's Siberian and Japanese iris seedlings.

Evelyn was an inveterate gardener and active in several flower societies serving as secretary for many years of Region 1 of the American Iris Society. The Whites attended all of the AIS national conventions from 1986 - 1999. Evelyn served as editor for eight years of *The Review of the Society for Japanese Irises*.

This former Latin teacher served as secretary for her Bates College class of 1938 for 63 years (where she met her John). She loved to travel and her favorite trip was her two-week African safari in Kenya at the age of 76. Evelyn and John raised four sons and one daughter and had 12 grandchildren whom she treasured.

REVISITING SIBERSPACE

Subject: Preparing beardless irises for shipping

Hi Everyone,

I'm stepping out of lurkdom to request some assistance and guidance from you knowledgeable beardless iris growers. The Garden Web has just incorporated an iris exchange into their forum listing, and I have offered to write up an instruction sheet on how to prepare various irises for shipping. These instructions are geared toward novice gardeners who may not even know what sort of irises they're growing, so I'm trying to make them as basic yet complete as possible. I'm better versed in handling bearded irises, so I wonder if you folks could answer a couple questions for me.

1. I know many people routinely soak incoming bearded (especially those coming from non-commercial sources) in a bleach solution to avoid transmitting pests and diseases into their gardens. Is it safe and/or advisable to do the same with beardless irises? Are there any other disease/pest preventative measures that should be taken with beardless species moving from one garden to another?

2. How long before first frost should beardless irises be planted in the fall to provide adequate pre-winter rooting-in time?

I appreciate your help!

Laurie F., Minnesota (northern)

Do not soak Siberians/Japanese iris in chlorox. Use Benlate instead. These irises must be kept moist during shipping and at least 3 weeks or until new growth is showing. We wrap the roots/rhizomes in wet paper towel and then tightly wrap plastic bag to keep them moist. In fact they will be rather dry in a week. Soak for up to 48 hrs. before planting. I don't really like to plant them after Sept. for good results.

Anna Mae Miller, Michigan

We dig beardless irises a day or two ahead of shipping. After washing thoroughly, they are allowed to sit in fresh water and Miracle Grow till shipping day. They get a chance to soak up a good drink and they'll shed a bit more debris that's been trapped in the roots. Gophers, not

borers, are the only real iris pest here and they're easy enough to pick off before shipping. :-)

Because we ship a number of things out of the US and delays can be a problem, the roots of each plant are wrapped in polymer gel held firmly with paper towels and a plastic bag. Especially nice thing when using polymer gel.... no dripping packages.

Christy Hensler, Washington

I have not shipped any beardless commercially but I have prepared beardless varieties for the Region 14 fall beardless sale. The basic process I call diapering. A pan large enough for a paper towel is filled to about an inch with cool water. One or two paper towels are passed through the pan to get the towel 100% wet. Any excess water is allow to drain back into the pan for a couple of seconds. The wet towel is then wrapped around all of the roots and the rhizome. If the roots are too massive they are trimmed to about 3 to 4 inches. Any excess paper toweling is wrapped around the root ball especially toward the intersection of the rhizome with the leaves. The rhizome and wet towel is then put into a plastic baggie that is the next size larger than the size of the rhizome. Twist tie wire is cut to the appropriate length, the baggie is wrapped tight to the leaves and the twist tie is used to secure the plastic baggie tight to the leaves just above the rhizome. Newspaper can be used for the paper towel but paper towels are nicer if big enough. Spurias, Siberians, Louisianas, Japanese and PCIs have all been done this way.

Once spurias break dormancy, it is best to pot them if they don't have to be shipped. Siberians can be held in cool water for awhile but are better potted if there is a long time between getting the bare root rhizomes and the customer taking possession (if possible). LAs, Japanese and PCI rhizomes can be held for long periods of time in cool water. With PCIs, the water should be replaced twice a week. I don't think that is necessary for the LAs or JIs.

I have a bunch of LAs in buckets right now and it may be a month or more before I get a chance to pot them. They have already been in the buckets for a month.

Harold Peters, California

I would agree with those who have written comments on shipping

beardless irises with one major exception. I dig my beardless irises the day before they are to be shipped and soak them in water to cover the roots overnight. I have gone to using wet newspaper as a wrapping material because I do not trim the roots and pack about five varieties together in one bag. This saves lots of time and expense for paper towels.

More importantly, I would not use fertilizer of any kind in the water when I soak the plants. Plants which are transplanted in the fall, especially late fall, should not be fertilized. It starts them growing and they continue to try to grow every time there is a warm spell during the winter. I have learned the hard way from experience not to fertilize transplants in the fall.

Carol Warner, Maryland

I just received a shipment from Carol and finally figured out how she finishes the plastic bag. She twists the loose part of the plastic bag until it tightens down on the bundle. Then she tucks the twisted tail behind and into the plastic bag.

Harold Peters, California

Very good tip, Carol. I use it for perennials that I give away all the time.

Anna Mae Miller, Michigan

*To join the Siberian e-mail robin:
sibrobsubscribe@yahoo.com

*To join the BeardlessIrisPhotos list:
BeardlessIrisPhotos-subscribe@yahoo.com

*To view the Society for Siberian Irises web page (maintained by Jim Wilson), use this URL:
<http://w3.one.net/~wilsonjh/ssi.htm>

RECENT TRENDS IN HYBRIDIZING SIBERIAN IRISES IN THE USA

*By Robert Hollingworth, given at the Species Symposium in
New Zealand, November 2000*

Although the event went entirely unrecognized by society at large, sometime in the mid-1990s the 1000th Siberian cultivar was named and registered with the American Iris Society (AIS). This number includes both the 28-chromosome and 40-chromosome Siberian sub-series and the interspecific crosses involving them. A significant fraction of this hybridizing activity has occurred in the decade of the 1990s when about 340 cultivars have been registered. This clearly indicates that interest in hybridizing Siberian irises continues unabated. This paper will concentrate on current hybridizing activities in the USA, but we fully recognize that important advances are being made elsewhere especially by Tomas Tamberg, who won the 1999 British Dykes Medal with his tetraploid Siberian iris, **Berlin Ruffles**, and, in England, by Jennifer Hewitt and Cy Bartlett, the 2000 British Dykes winner with the Siberian iris, **Perfect Vision**. Also the focus here is primarily on the 28-chromosome group of Siberians, which we will henceforth call “garden” Siberians for ease of reference.

This designation lacks accuracy since the 40-chromosome group are also fine garden subjects under conditions that favor their growth e.g. the cool, damp regions of the Pacific Northwest in the USA. Here the 40-chromosome Siberians are being advanced remarkably by hybridizers such as Lorena Reid. Her expression of the *I. clarkei* “butterfly” pattern in the lovely **Dotted Line** (Reid ‘92) attracted all eyes at the 1994 AIS convention in Portland, OR, US and the promise of novel orange and apricot shades comes from Lorena’s 40-chromosome **Anticipation Orange** (Reid ‘95).

Important milestones in the development of the garden Siberians have been: the introduction of **White Swirl** (Cassebeer, 1957), notable for its flaring, gently ruffled falls and whose genes are very widely disseminated in most of today’s cultivars; the development through the use of colchicine of the first tetraploids (**Fourfold White** and **Orville Fay**) by Currier McEwen in 1970, and the first notably yellow Siberian, **Butter and Sugar**, again introduced by Currier McEwen, in 1977. It is enlightening to trace the impact of these last two innovations over the following 20-30 years to the present.

Mad, muddy or moody? Yellows and new color blends

After **Butter and Sugar** appeared in 1977, it seemed that it should be quite easy to advance further by developing deeper yellow colors, broader flower parts, and improved branching and bud count, all in combination with good vigor and clump form. Although some pleasing light yellows from **Butter and Sugar** breeding were produced within the following decade (e.g. **Pas-de-Deux** (Hollingworth '88)) and **Isabelle** (Warburton '89), it has taken 20 years and, at times, considerable frustration to bring all these desirable characteristics together. Recent introductions do achieve this combination e.g. **Summer Revels** (Schafer/Sacks, 1999), **Dance Suzy** (Schafer/Sacks, 1999) and **Hello Yellow** (Hollingworth, 1999). Seedlings from both these hybridizers include buttercup yellow amoenas and bi-tones, and it now seems reasonable to hope that a bright all-yellow Siberian will eventually be available.

As the status of yellow Siberians has slowly advanced, the combination of yellow with other pigments has become possible and is providing interesting new shades and color contrasts. Sometimes these are more curious than beautiful with muddy (or moody, depending on the viewpoint of the individual) effects, but in others these colors combine in a more subtle way e.g. **Echo The Wind** (Schafer/Sacks, 1999) has an intricate overlay of blue-violet on a yellow base that is very attractive. Similarly, yellow and lavender are combined in **Salamander Crossing** (Schafer/Sacks, 1999) and **Sarah Tiffney** (Schafer/Sacks, 1999) and in **Lemon Veil** (Bauer/Coble '00). Some of our recent seedlings with red-violet coloring over a strong yellow base give vivid colors that clearly approach orange-brown where the yellow color is strongest.

Doubled up: Tetraploids 30 years after...

The status and pros and cons of tetraploid Siberians were reviewed by several authors in a recent issue of *The Siberian Iris* (Spring, 1996). Generally tetraploid flowers are somewhat larger than diploids and have more intense colors and patterns and stronger substance, though many modern diploids also have large, bright flowers. Tetraploids do tend to lack the daintiness and grace of many older diploids that are close to the species form. The robust, more dramatic appearance of tetraploids suits them for different garden situations than the more delicate types of diploids, but both have a useful role to

play in gardens. The popularity of tetraploids continues to be quite high in the USA, e.g. four of the last dozen Morgan-Wood medals for the best Siberian iris in the USA have been awarded to tetraploids, and they occupied four of the six top positions in the latest popularity poll of the Society for Siberian Irises.

A tetraploid Siberian, **Strawberry Fair** (Hollingworth '94), won the Franklin Cook Cup at the AIS National Convention in Portland in 1994 as the best iris on display from outside the region. This was the first such award for any beardless iris. Overseas, too, they have support since the last two British Dykes Medals have gone to tetraploid Siberians. However, it is also evident that 30 years after their first introduction, tetraploids have by no means displaced diploids in the public interest, and several prominent hybridizers in the USA such as Marty Schafer and Jan Sacks, Calvin Helsley, and Anna Mae Miller have concentrated their efforts solely on diploids.

Because of their different qualities, it is likely that both diploid and tetraploid Siberians will continue to attract interest. Some recent tetraploids from the US that seem to us to particularly merit attention include:

Blueberry Fair (Hollingworth, '97). Extremely ruffled, frilly, round multi-shaded blue-violet. Our current favorite iris!

Butter & Cream (McEwen '99). The yellowest tetraploid so far.

Dirigo Black Velvet (White '99). Dramatic near black with gold signal.

Emily Anne (Hollingworth '01). Blue-violet plicata dashes on a creamy yellow background.

Golden Edge (McEwen '92). Velvety rich violet-blue with a gold wire edge on the falls.

Harpwell Love (McEwen '98). Opens light yellow-green fading to white, nicely ruffled.

Hi Di (Aitken '95). Dark blue-purple with a hairline white edge on the falls.

Lavender Fair (Hollingworth '00). Strongly ruffled mix of lavender and light-blue.

Over In Gloryland (Hollingworth '93). Deep blue-purple, metallic gold signal, velvet surface.

Pride in Blue (McEwen '98). Pure light-blue with no red influence.
Shall We Dance (Hollingworth '92). Sophisticated blue bitone, lovely form.

Somebody Loves Me (Hollingworth '98). Round, well-ruffled mid blue-violet with a very large white signal area.

Strawberry Fair (Hollingworth '94). Bubble ruffles and a fully round form in rich orchid pink.

The future for tetraploids seems bright. Good yellow tetraploids are very rare and there is much room for improvement here. The interesting new shades and patterns produced by combining yellow with other pigments are likely to be more intense and varied in tetraploid versions. Finally, the exploration of tetraploid 6-fall and multipetal forms has hardly begun but should yield remarkable new flowers.

A neat trick: The genes are jumping

In 1997, John White introduced the aptly-named **Neat Trick**. This is a dark-blue self which is unpredictably speckled with white dots and dashes providing an eye-catching effect. In fact, at least one previous iris, **Appaloosa Blue** (Bellagamba '84), has a similar pattern but the white dashes are expressed against a pale blue background and are much less obvious. Some genetically-sophisticated observers have speculated that this pattern may represent an example of transposable elements (transposons) in action. Transposons are sequences of apparently useless genetic material that can replicate and translocate, i.e jump between the chromosomes. The insertion of a transposon into a key gene in the blue-pigment pathway could disrupt its activity and cause a local mutation to white. Right or wrong in theory, this discovery opens up a new color pattern that many find to be attractive.

Just how many petals did you say? The Japanese touch

Approximately 200 years ago in his book on the cultivation of Japanese iris, Matsudaira Sakiugo recorded the existence of a form of *I. sanguinea* with multiple petals and this led him to try to develop a similar form of *I. ensata*. The results of this endeavor are evident today in the much-admired multipetal Japanese irises. But, somewhere along the line, the multipetal *I. sanguinea* seems to have been forgotten until recently. An apparently similar *I. sanguinea* form was discovered near

Nagoya in Japan some years ago and has been used by Ho Shidara in a breeding program resulting in a number of multipetal Siberians including **Manju**, **Ranman** and **Uzushio**. These were first seen in the USA as guests at the Siberian Iris Convention in Michigan in 1993.

They have been used particularly by Bob Bauer and John Coble, at Ensata Gardens, to produce a series of striking multipetal seedlings. The cleverly named **Kabluey** (Bauer/Coble, 1999) is deep blue-violet with a white signal and has an explosion of up to 27 petals and petaloids. These are arranged as 3 falls and 6 standards, with 3 more falls and 6 more standards in a hose-in-hose arrangement. The flower center consists of a variable number of petaloids which replace the reproductive parts.

Several more Siberians of this type have been recently introduced by Ensata including **Tornado Rose** Bauer/Coble '00) in which a mass of rose-lavender petals are caught up in the whirlwind, and **Double Standards** (Bauer/Coble '00) which has 3 falls and six standards in an orderly arrangement. To be more than curiosities, these multipetal flowers do need a high level of symmetry which is not always evident among seedlings, but this regularity is a goal that seems achievable in time and eventually we can anticipate seeing well-organized peony-type Siberians come from this line of breeding.

In a second novel form of *I. sanguinea*, developed in Japan by Ho Shidara and Hiroshi Shimizu, the normal three standards are converted to falls. This gives a form parallel to that of the common 6-fall Japanese irises. Examples include **Parasol** (Shidara '99) and **Roku Oji** (Shimizu '00). We have spent quite a bit of time in last 7-8 years working on this form to get new colors and patterns, fuller flower parts, and improved branching and bud count.

Fungal resistance is also needed since sensitivity to American strains of botrytis is commonly seen in these Japanese sanguineas. This combination of qualities has not been easy to assemble. The six-fall trait is not simple genetically and appears variably among offspring and even in different flowers on the same plant. Intermediates between the 3-fall and 6-fall states are very common. In many cases, it has been hard to recover any full 6-fall irises from crosses involving 3-fall and 6-fall types. Nevertheless a number of promising seedlings, including 6-fall yellows, are now appearing, which suggest that success may be just

around the corner. Further coverage of this topic is provided by Hollingworth (TSI, Spring 1998). You can see pictures of both six-fall and multipetal Siberians in the *British Iris Society's Iris Yearbook for 2000* (Coble and Hollingworth, "Hybridising new forms of Siberian irises").

Ménage à trois: *I. typhifolia* joins the scene

All the foregoing discussion involves garden Siberians derived from two species, *I. sibirica* and *I. sanguinea*, but a third species also belongs in this 28-chromosome group, *I. typhifolia*. This was first described in 1939 but was not available to western growers until recently (*The Siberian Iris*, C. McEwen, 1996), p. 19). When seed from *I. typhifolia* collected in northeast China first became available in the West in the late 1980s, there was considerable interest in assessing its potential to add desirable new traits to the Siberian iris gene pool.

Certainly crosses between *I. typhifolia* and garden Siberians are easy to make, the seed is fertile, and the hybrid plants grow vigorously. At least two useful typhifolia characteristics are transferred to many of the progeny; earliness of bloom and narrow, spirally-twisting foliage. The typhifolia-derived cultivars often bloom 2 to 3 weeks before the peak season for garden Siberians, significantly extending the season. However, in my own crosses, most of the flowers have so far been unremarkable, which is not too surprising since the flowers of *I. typhifolia* differ little from those of the other two species in the group. Even worse, the foliage of these plants, like that of the *I. typhifolia* parents, has a disturbing habit of collapsing into a tangled mass in late summer. Perhaps others have been similarly frustrated since only one *I. typhifolia* x garden Siberian cross has so far been registered with AIS, **China Spring** (Bauer-Coble, 1999). This cross, involving **Springs Brook** (Warburton/Schafer/Sacks, 1988), has broad light blue flowers with a very early bloom season. Probably future generations of breeding with *I. typhifolia* will provide other cultivars of merit. A very early white Siberian would be particularly valuable since none is presently available.

The Future: "Can I have it both ways, please?"

An astounding range of variation in both color and form is being discovered in garden Siberians which takes us far from original species forms and patterns. Exciting times lie ahead. New shades and color

combinations involving yellow can lead to orchid, orange and brown shades both subtle and shocking. Complex pastel color blends are being produced on superbly ruffled flowers. New flower forms, especially six-fall and multipetal Siberians, will soon become widely available providing flowers with a new and impressive garden impact. These advances are still to be explored in the tetraploid format where one would expect intensification of these new colors and patterns compared to diploids.

Purists may raise objection to this wild and abandoned pursuit of novelty on the part of hybridizers, but we simply build on what nature has already provided. Even tetraploid forms of Siberians can occur naturally, if this minor form of genetic engineering should be of concern in our apprehensive world. This profusion of forms is no different than has already occurred with other familiar flowers – the Japanese iris, the rose and the peony, all of which exist and are appreciated in a variety of forms from singles to multipetal types. Yet it is clear that the classical forms of Siberians are still valid and treasured and are being explored in modern formats. The comfort of the tried and true and the excitement of the novel. Yes, you can have it both ways with Siberians.

GIVING THE SSI SLIDE SHOW/TALK IS FUN!

by Debora Totoonchie, California

This is only my second year as a SSI member, but I have quickly become an enthusiast. Siberians do well here and are tolerant of both deer and my acidic heavy clay soil. I now grow 50+ varieties here in the California Sierra Foothills, elevation 2000 ft, Zone 7.

I have given the SSI slide show twice and I loved doing it. In the first instance, I sort of volunteered, actually our local garden club, Foothill Horticulture Society (FHS) was petitioning for board members. I declined the offer to become a board member, but agreed to do a Siberian talk *one day* proving that I could 'do my share'. They took me up on the offer and the date was set for the 3rd week in April. Yikes, now what?? I emailed Bob and Judy Hollingworth to make sure I could get the slides on that date and Bob assured me it would be fine.

The slides are breathtakingly beautiful, and they come with an outlined talk, handouts about SSI, Siberian culture information sheets that you can copy which makes it so very easy. This fall I was recruited by a board member of our Nevada County Master Gardeners (MG). She said "Just do the same thing they will love it!" I agreed to do a talk and was the speaker for Oct.

Although members in both clubs had heard of Siberian iris, only a handful grew them. They were more familiar with bearded iris so I worked out a little demo on bearded vs. beardless iris, briefly going over differences in culture and habits. A fun thing I did was choose 2 helpers, a willowy lady gardener to represent beardless and a big gruff gentleman (with a beard of course) to represent the 'other' iris. This broke the ice and the audience howled over my choice of "excellent specimens" and I awarded both my helpers a potted iris from their representative group as a thank you. Next came the slide presentation.

Both clubs were interested in the names of the varieties shown on the slides, culture, tetraploidy vs. diploidy, can they grow in pots, where to buy them and how much do they cost? Many were hesitant of purchasing mail order, because of previous experiences with large, glossy, magazine plant mail-order businesses. I explained about the great deals and big healthy plants I have received mail order and assured them they would get a superior and correctly labeled plant from an SSI garden.

Additionally, Master Gardeners also asked how many chilling hours required for best results, exact soil pH, inches of water each week, methods of water delivery, companion planting, and had some interest in breeding and genetics.

My handout consisted of 3 sheets, one with Siberian culture copied from the information Bob and Judy sent with the slides, one of suppliers I wanted to recommend and a blank sheet of paper for notes. There was a lot of enthusiasm in both groups for ordering, I heard pens and pencils scratching down the names of their favorite varieties during the slide presentation *in case* they became converts.

I made a point of having lots of iris 'party favors' on the front of the table for people to take home. One thing people love is free stuff. I brought membership handouts to the AIS, SSI, and back issues of TSI that Bob and Judy had sent with the slides. I also put out my extra AIS magazines, any iris mail order catalogs that I had on hand, and many packets of saved Siberian seed with growing instructions. FHS has a plant raffle and I brought 3 divisions and one potted Siberian. The treasurer reported they brought in "lots of money". I also made a thank-you gift of one nice potted Siberian to the person in each club who had recruited me for the talk.

Jim Murphy, Zone 7 in the Piedmont Region of Va. writes:

I gave a slide presentation 4 years ago to a group of gardeners and homeowners at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. The talk was actually about irises in general as landscape plants from a horticulturist's perspective. (I am a professional Horticulturist).

The talk was in the winter and focused on a slide presentation of cultivars of the various groups. I was able to bring in many SI slides and live Siberian iris plants to show and divide, then give away. I felt at the time, and still do, that Siberian irises are the best adapted iris to our Virginia climate and heavy soils. The soils in this area are generally heavy, acidic, clay soils. The foliage of the SI's make them the best subject in the non-bloom season. too, as we have an 7 month growing season. A long time ago I attended a lecture and demonstration by Andre Viette on perennials. He horrified all of the novice attendees by using an ax to divide daylilies and Siberian irises. He split them as one would split firewood. I brought part of this demo into my presentation by chopping the dormant Siberians into little pieces and

handing a piece to each attendee with the admonition: plant them and watch them grow.

*The slides were excellent and really allowed novices to see what a plant looks like in bloom. Of course only the best and newest were represented, but a few slides of plants like **CAESAR'S BROTHER** and **TEALWOOD** were thrown in, which are available locally for a few dollars. This is important to attracting new people into our net! Plants that perform well in the local area, and are cheap, are one of the best sales tools that we have at our disposal.*

Both Jim and I agree that giving the SSI slide presentation is fun. Fellow gardeners appreciated our sense of humor and loved the beautiful SSI slides. You will meet some really nice people and might be served delicious homemade desserts!

The Siberian slides may be rented from SSI for \$5.00. You will pay the shipping cost of returning them. If you are interested write to:

Bob Hollingworth
124 Sherwood RD. East
Williamston, MI 48895

E-mail address: cyberiris@netscape.net

CONVENTION ADVENTURES

Maureen Mark, Ontario, Canada

I didn't know what I was getting into when I agreed to report on a convention garden for TSI. I didn't think twice about it when Ellen asked. Of course I'd do it. And I might even get Emily to write a bit too. This would be Emily's first convention and she has just turned eleven.

The first qualms of uneasiness struck when Ellen told me that I and another "victim" had been assigned the Warner Garden. Carol Warner owns and operates *Draycott Gardens* and is responsible for **SHAKER'S PRAYER**, Morgan-Wood Medal winner in 1996. So with a mix of awe that I would be reviewing the bloom in that garden and hope that maybe there wouldn't be too many Siberians in bloom, I nodded agreement. After all, I only grow maybe one percent of the number of Siberians that they do. I shouldn't worry, should I?

With bated breath on Thursday, we get on the tour bus. Sigh of relief. The yellow buses are doing the northern gardens, so I'll get a chance to get into the rhythm of the mad dash to see the bloom in the guest gardens and coach Emily at the same time. As usual, there is never enough time in any garden. I vow to pace myself better the next day. At the end of the day, only three beardless irises are on my list to check out in western and southern tours. They are **KRILL** (Copeland 2000), a lovely pale yellow pseudacorus, **SOMEBODY LOVES ME** (Hollingsworth 1998), a lovely ruffled and round tetraploid light blue with a large white blaze, and **SALAMANDER CROSSING** (Schaefer/Sachs 1999), a wonderful violet on yellow blend.

Friday dawns a bit cooler and overcast – perfect for pictures. I remember my camera (that I forgot to throw in my tote bag on Thursday) so I manage to get in a few pics and heaved another sigh of relief because we were touring the western gardens. At the end of Friday, I figure that I can manage anything when we tour the southern gardens on Saturday. I've managed to see all the beardless irises in the guest beds and make notes on many of them. I add to

my list of favourites – **BAND OF ANGELS** (Hollingsworth, 1996), a medium blue tetraploid with a solid-cream band on the falls, and **PANSY PURPLE** (McEwen, 1969), a vibrant solid purple with blue tones and lighter edge on the falls. I'd never seen **PANSY PURPLE** before and was impressed by the clumps that I saw. **SOMEBODY LOVES ME** and **SALAMANDER CROSSING** were looking good in these gardens too. It was a good day.

Then I wake up to thunder and then flashes of lightening. It must be the early hours of the morning. I can handle this, I say to myself. Let it storm now. It'll be nice when dawn rolls around. Go back to sleep. More thunder and lightening. Really, it will be fine. It **WILL** be **FINE**. The litany worked. I fell asleep. I crack open my eyes as the radio blares out that it's six o'clock. It's dark out. That's okay. It was overcast yesterday and looked like that. It will be **FINE**. **NOT!**

The Warner Garden was the first stop. As the bus backs in, the steady drizzle becomes a steady rain. We were at the bus with a great big beige umbrella. After greeting us, Carol quickly runs back to the house to get out extra umbrellas and to check on the cinnamon buns. The rain alternates between drizzle and steady rain for our whole visit. But I am not daunted. I make notes with my book tucked as much as possible in my rain resistant but not rain-proof jacket. Only when I'm finished do I seek shelter and wolf down three wonderful, warm cinnamon rolls.

One day I will return to spend more time in Carol's garden under more clement weather conditions. The convention booklet tells us that "Draycott" means "peaceful retreat" or "secluded spot". I think that is the sense that has been achieved in the gardens around the house. The commercial gardens are in a separate area. The gardens around the house achieve a peaceful balance of open space, mixed perennial beds for both sun and shade, and an incredible selection of trees and shrubs.

As we enter the 9-acre property, the sweep of the driveway is lined with a variety of well-spaced conifers. The first garden bed greets us with peonies and irises in full bloom. As everyone dashes to the guest beds, I stroll through the garden beds in the drizzle. *Iris tectorum*, **OVER IN GLORYLAND** (Hollingsworth, 1992),

ROANOKE'S CHOICE (McGarvey 1975) and **DEMURE ILLINI** (Varner, 1984) are strutting their stuff in this bed. I am disappointed that **LAKE KEUKA** (Borglum, 1991) is in tight bud with lots of stalks. I've been waiting to see this one.

As I stroll through other garden beds, I am delighted and surprised at the combinations in the garden. **WELCH'S REWARD**, an MTB is tucked in at the edge of a shade garden beside a variegated shrub that looks like Weigela. The large clump of **LAKE KEUKA** is growing well beside a nice specimen of *Hosta Minuteman*. I even spy some tall beardededs growing and blooming in the shade. And the combination of pink peonies blooming along side blue Siberians is outstanding.

Only slightly damp at this point, I make my way to the main plantings. This included the regular Siberian beds and the guest beds. A Siberian addict could overdose on the sight that greeted me. The garden was in peak condition. Seas of various shades of blue, broken by some pinks and whites danced over vigorous clumps of green.

A couple of oldies caught my eye. A huge clump of **BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL** (Cleveland 1935) had dainty blooms held high, **SUMMER SKY** (Cleveland, 1939) was a perky pale blue with a yellow signal and **BLUE WINGS** (Cleveland 1927) was a lovely lavender blue. Nice clumps of **PINK HAZE** (McGarvey 1969) and **TEMPER TANTRUM** (McGarvey 1969) were scattered around. **SULTAN'S RUBY** (Hollingworth, 1988), **JEWELLED CROWN** (Hollingworth, 1985), and **MAGENTA MOMENT** (Helsley, 1993), **HIGH STANDARDS** (Hollingworth, 1986), **HUBBARD** (McEwen 1982), **SPIRIT OF YORK** (Bush, 1983), **SHALL WE DANCE** (Hollingworth, 1992), **SHIRLEY POPE** (McEwen, 1979) were all beautiful full clumps with dozens of bloom stalks. And if that wasn't enough, there were two glorious clumps of **SHAKER'S PRAYER** (Warner, 1989) flanking one of the many arbors in the garden and towering over all its neighbouring Siberians.

The rain lets up a bit as I head to the guest beds. Marty Schaefer and Jan Sacks have been making great advances on the diploids with new yellows and lavenders over yellow. If you've been searching for yellow, you might be looking for **TOM SCHAEFER**

..... at the 2001 AIS convention



ROSY BOWS
(Bauer/Coble '00)

NEAT TRICK
(White '97)



LOUISON
(Helsley '98)

SOMEBODY LOVES ME
(Hollingworth '98)



Photos by Jim Morris, Missouri

..... at the 2001 AIS convention



TOM SCHAEFER
(Schaefer/Sacks '00)

DIRIGO BLACK VELVET
(White '99)



I. setosa SYLVANSHINE
(Mahan/Warner '97) with
SALAMANDER CROSSING
(Schaefer/Sacks '99)



HUBBARD
(McEwen '82)

Photos by Jim Morris, Missouri

(2000). This is a shorter plant and is a nicely rounded yellow bitone. The standards are the typical light yellow, but the falls scream Crayola yellow. Marty and Jan say that this is their best yellow. I do like it more than their **SUMMER REVELS** (1999), a light canary yellow, which is supposed to repeat bloom and **SUNNY SPELLS** (2000), a light yellow bitone.

SALAMANDER CROSSING (1999) is in a totally different class. The standards are lavender with heavier lavender speckling and the falls are pale yellow overlaid with lavender speckles. The yellow signal and lavender veining complete the lavender and yellow theme. This is a vigorous grower with a long bloom period. **SARAH TIFFNEY** (1999) belongs in this colour class, too. It was growing much shorter than its registered 36 inches but was definitely cute. I was hoping to see **BOOK OF SECRETS** (2000) but it was definitely past peak and its last bloom was fading. It is lavender and yellow, too.

And if you like the veins on **SHAKER'S PRAYER**, you should definitely try **BANISH MISFORTUNE** (1999) and **PENNY-WHISTLE** (2000). I grow these two and **BANISH MISFORTUNE** threw up six bloom stalks on a first year plant. **PENNY-WHISTLE** was a fall shipment but I'm hoping to see one or two blooms this season.

Others that warranted a second look were **OFF SHE GOES** (1998), a very floriferous ruffled pale lavender, **SHIPS ARE SAILING** (1998), a tall majestic bluebird blue and **SEA OF DREAMS** (2000), light blue with a deep blue wire edge.

Bob Bauer and John Coble are taking diploid Siberians into an entirely different direction – polypetals. You will either love them or hate them. There were many oohs and ahhs over **TORNADO ROSE** (2000). It's described in the catalogue as having 9 to 12 petals with lavender pink standard and rosy pink falls. For some reason, I couldn't find this in the checklist. The huge clump held lots of bloom stalks and a sea of pink petals. **ROSY BOWS** (2000) has an adorable miniature flower (about 2 inches in diameter) with a more formal look with its well-arranged rosy lavender ruffled petals. **SHEBANG** (1999) has a totally different arrangement of its

many petals. The rosy violet petals with their large white blazes are arranged informally hose-in-hose. Then there's **KABLUEY** (1999) with its dark blue violet petals with a white blaze clustered neatly like a Japanese peony. I think we'd have trouble convincing the general public that these are indeed Siberian irises. But John and Bob are working in other directions, too. **CHINA SPRING** (1999) is a lovely large light blue that was near the end of its bloom season. It is an early bloomer as it is a cross of **SPRINGS BROOK** and *I. typhifolia*. And it is fertile. The dozens of bloom stalks had many pods forming. And there is **LEMON VEIL** (2000). If you're looking for a different colour, this could be it. The standards are white and the falls are pale yellow with some lavender veining so the overall effect is a different shade of pale pink.

We can't discuss Siberians without mentioning Bob Hollingworth's tetraploids. **SOMEBODY LOVES ME** (1998) was a runner-up to the Franklin Cook Cup. It was wonderful in all the gardens. It is registered as a ruffled medium blue-violet with a large white blaze. But the blaze is so large that I think it is better described as having a wide light blue band on the falls. It is a large flower and beautifully ruffled. **SIMPLE GIFTS** (1992) stunned me. I've always wondered about this one. This is a shorter one with falls held horizontally and an extremely full rounded shape. It is the clean simple full lines that makes it spectacular. It is an earlier bloomer and was on its last bloom stalk when I saw it. As a full clump in bloom it would make a nice contrast to other Siberians. **BLUEBERRY FAIR** (1997) is a nice blue with distinctive ruffling like **STRAWBERRY FAIR** (1992). **BAND OF ANGELS** (1996) was looking good here and at other gardens. It is a shorter cultivar with an even cream band on medium blue-violet.

Bob also guested some seedlings. A few interesting ruffled ones, but the one that everyone wants is 97B6B8. Carol Warner describes it as a ruffled deep wine flower with a huge white signal surrounded by a blue halo and veins and set off by a bright white wire rim around the falls. The style arms are wide and fancy and have a touch of turquoise in them. The blue halo and the turquoise in the style arms make this one distinctive.

Carol also gusted a number of seedlings. Seedlings #13 and #14 caught my eye. But my notes are much too smudged to read and my memory is definitely not what it used to be. Maybe someone else can report on Carol's seedlings.

All in all, a wonderful adventure, but I will have to return in more clement weather.



Tom Abrego, Oregon

The first morning of our tours found us winding through the fog shrouded hills and valleys of Maryland's verdant horse country. Eventually we made our way to *Sans Souci*, the home, garden and nursery of Dr. Bruce Hornstein and Lee Dorman.

As soon as we stepped off the bus it was apparent that we were in the garden of Siberian iris lovers. Two magnificent clumps of **CAESAR'S BROTHER** (Morgan 1932) sat at either end of the first Siberian bed. Another historic Siberian, **DRAGONFLY** (Dykes 1923), beautifully displayed its pale blue flowers. With its rich wine color **ROARING JELLY** (Schafer-Sacks 1992) stood out, as did the bright blue of **LEE'S BLUE** (Bauer-Coble 1994).

Upper beds contained an interesting collection of Siberian iris, including most of the guest Siberians. Unfortunately, these clumps appeared relatively young with spotty bloom, perhaps also suffering from the recent drought. Just the same, there was enough that a visitor could at least see some bloom on most of the iris in these beds. With its height, interesting color and flower form, **SALAMANDER CROSSING** (Schafer-Sacks 1999) stood out, as did the rich dark blue-violet **RIVERDANCE** (Schafer-Sacks 1997). Two good wine-colored iris caught the viewer's attention: lightly ruffled **MAGENTA MOMENT** (Helsley 1992) and **BERLIN PURPLE WINE** (Tamberg 1993). It was great to see a nice clump of the exquisitely beautiful *I. sanguinea* 'Kamayama' in full bloom as well.

A stroll down the hill from the entrance beds and house led to a serene pond. The songs of a chorus of birds filled the morning air, and the contemplative setting invited a pause in the rush to see

everything. Louisiana iris are planted in the pond and Siberian, Japanese and other beardless iris are planted in beds flanking the pond. These plantings seem very young and produced little bloom. It will be a stunning sight in several years, once the iris become more established.

Time was at a premium in this thirteen-acre property, so a quick waddle up the hill, past the home and its small ponds led to the production field. The vista looking out over the field was spectacular and the temptation was to sit and take in the beautiful scenery. Yet the field was filled with rows and rows of Siberians and even more display beds. A fast march through the rows and past the display beds gave these highlights: a beautiful clump of **LAUGHING BROOK** (Waite 1984), flowers of **SAILOR'S FANCY** (Schafer/Sacks 1991) shimmering in the morning sun, always perky **ILLINI CHARM** (Varner 1975), the incredibly vigorous local origination **SHAKER'S PRAYER** (Warner 1990) and the recent Morgan-Wood Medal winner, ever-illustrious **STRAWBERRY FAIR** (Hollingworth 1994). A clump of the very unusual *I. sanguinea* 'Kobana' was in full bloom, displaying a profusion of its oddly formed flowers. It was great to see a good clump of **MARANATHA** (Varner 1974), with its ultra thin leaves and spidery flower and clump form. The surprise find in these display beds was being shown a clump of the beautiful **UEBER DEN WOLKEN** (Tamberg 1994) in bloom. These delicately colored pale blue flowers lent subtle cheer to a beautiful spring morning.

Alas, the whistles blew and it was time to go. It would have been nice to have had the time to enjoy the beautiful home and the gorgeous view from its decks. It would be great to return to *Sans Souci* in a year or two to see the iris plantings as they are more established.

The last day of our tour (a gray drizzly "Oregon" day) found us in and around historic Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The final garden on our tour was that of Harold and Gayle Griffie located at Gayle's family home amid the orchard country near Biglersville. The home and garden are located on a gentle hill, affording an excellent view of the surrounding apple orchards.

As it was at *Sans Souci*, it was immediately apparent upon leav-

ing the bus that we were in the garden of serious Siberian iris lovers. A beeline was made to the closest Siberian guest beds. The Siberian guests were relatively small and the bloom was less than full. Again, **SALAMANDER CROSSING** (Schafer-Sacks 1999) really stood out, as did Hollingworth seedling 97C10B4, with its large flat slightly ruffled white flowers. With its diminutive stature, a magnificently blooming clump of **THAT'S MY BABY** (Hollingworth 1995) showed the promise of "intermediate" Siberians.

The Griffies' personal collection of Siberian iris is planted in several beds, particularly around their beautiful gazebo. These are well-grown mature clumps in full bloom. It's just so great to see so many "old friends" growing and blooming so well! These include the overlooked yellow amoena **STAR CLUSTER** (Hager 1978), the delicately colored **CRÈME CHANTILLY** (McEwen 1981), the floriferous light blue **HARBOR MIST** (Waite 1983), **RUFFLED VELVET** (McEwen 1973), **SALLY KERLIN** (McEwen 1970) and well-named **TEMPER TANTRUM** (McGarvey 1986). It was also very good to see two excellent (and too often overlooked) local originations of the late George C. Bush, **FROSTY RIM** (1979) and **SPIRIT OF YORK** (1985). And finally, a walk through the lower garden led to the discovery of several beautiful clumps of the author's favorite, **PANSY PURPLE** (McEwen 1971).

We covered a lot of territory in two states during our three days of tours. There just didn't seem to be enough time to enjoy the gardens to their fullest. I'd love to return to Gettysburg and visit the historic sights, and while there, I'd definitely return to the Griffies' garden.



Anna Mae Miller, Michigan

The spring weather posed several anxious moments for the garden hosts at this convention. First they had some unseasonably hot weather followed by about 35 days of drought (they've been in a 3-year drought). Just before the convention rain came in time to give the irises some needed moisture for height. The TBs seemed to be bunched more than typical but the siberian iris were growing well although some clumps were not as tall as normal.

I was fortunate to get a preview of Carol Warner's *Draycott Gardens* on Monday evening and saw good bloom.

It was good to see the new doubles and multipetals developed by *Ensata Gardens* (John Coble/Bob Bauer): **ROSY BOWS** (00), very early, ruffled petals and style crest in a rosy-red was a lovely blooming clump and a sib to **JIGGLES** (00), ruffled light-blue (not multipetal); **KABLUEY** (99) 18-27 dark-blue violet with white starburst on 6 falls, then 12 standards and more petalloids was a nice blooming clump. **TUMBLE BUG** (00), a dark rose-wine, 12 petals arranged in a flat form was in good bloom, a sib to later blooming **TORNADO ROSE** and **BUNDLE OF JOY** (multipetalled). These plants were not official guests but what a treat to see them. **CHINA SPRING** (99), from Springs Brook x *I. typhifolia*, a very early, tall medium-blue, blooms early to extend the bloom season.

Calvin Helsley, MO, also had irises blooming very well. **LOUI-SON** (98), blooming rosy-wine, with large white signal, **MAGENTA MOMENT**, (92) a ruffled magenta red was a nice clump as was **WHERE EAGLES DARE** (98), a tall dark blue violet and **WINGS OF NIGHT** (90), a velvety red-black.

Bob and Judy Hollingworth, MI, had several guest plants blooming very well: **BAND OF ANGELS** (96), an induced tetraploid from **CAMBRIDGE, FORREST McCORD** (83) and **STRAWBERRY FAIR** (94) background, blooming above foliage, a mid blue-purple with a large creamy yellow blaze, and a creamy band around the fall; **SOMEBODY LOVES ME**, (98), full round, ruffled falls of bright mid-blue with lighter style arms, and a large white blaze giving the effect of a rim. Guest seedlings were from the '97's and ranged in color from very dark, very deep wine, nice mid-purple and 97B1B25 was especially lovely. A non-guest was blooming well, **SIMPLE GIFTS** (94), almost white with a faint lavender overlay, large circular, horizontal, tailored falls float over glaucous foliage.

Many of Marty Schaefer/Jan Sacks, MA plants also belonged to Carol's private collection. **SALAMANDER CROSSING** (99), is from the yellows under blue, small flowers on tall stalks held above

the foliage, **BANISH MISFORTUNE** (99) mid-violet small flowers with subtle coloring **PENNYWHISTLE** (00), Blue and violet marked with cream, small flowered, tall Siberian. Two yellows, attracted much attention: **SUMMER REVELS** (99) a bitone, was lovely, **SUNNY SPELLS** (00) more yellow but the eye catcher was the yellowest Siberian, **TOM SCHAEFER** (00) putting on a real show. Guests blooming were **SHIPS ARE SAILING** (98) and John White's **DIRIGO BLACK VELVET** (99) was a beautiful clump with deep black-purple showing a great deal of promise in this class.

Michael Zarky, CA, a new hybridizer had a nice blooming clump of **ZARKY ONE** which is a combination of magenta wine and royal blue overlay with many 2 branched stalks blooming above the foliage.

Carol's selected seedlings were blooming very well in their home garden. One had won Best Seedling at the Francis Scott Key Iris Show held at the convention hotel. My favorites both at the show and in the garden were Warner's #10, 12, and 14.

Too soon the whistle blew and a few miles down the road we were at Bruce Hornstein's *Sans Souci Gardens* where we saw a large planting of Calvin Helsley's **CARMEN JEANNE**, (96) blooming deep violet-blue with a large white signal. Shaefer/Sacks had two nice clumps putting on a show: **BLACKBERRY JUBILEE** (92) and **RIVERDANCE** (92) were both blooming well. Steve Varner's **ILLINI RUBY** (90), a lovely wine with deeper red spathes was a nice clump. In the commercial beds many Siberians were in full bloom.

Second day of touring saw us at Sterling Innerst's garden where he had 2 levels and the Siberian bed was superb. Bob Hollingworth's **BLUEBERRY FAIR** (97), a nice ruffled purple just beginning, **SIMPLE GIFTS**, a lovely clump and **SOMEBODY LOVES ME** (98) was also blooming very well. Currier McEwen's **ME HARP-SWELL VELVET** (90) tetraploid, a dark velvety blue-purple was performing well.

Schaefer/Sacks' **FOND KISS** (99) with falls white with lavender pink in center of the falls and warm white standards. A very nice flower. **SALAMANDER CROSSING** was a good clump as was

SHIPS ARE SAILING (98), a lighter blue in a horizontal shape. John White's, **ME DIRIGO BLACK VELVET** has a good shape and was a nice clump. Michael Zarky's, **CA ZARKY ONE** (not yet introduced) had lots of bloom and an unusual magenta/blue and a nicely shaped blossom.

By the third day the rain has caught up with us but it did clear shortly after we arrived at Joan and Ken Roberts' Friendship Gardens, a relatively new garden that had a wonderful creek where the Siberians were planted but had been partially destroyed when the creek flooded. However, her personal clumps of Siberians were blooming very well. **LILTING LAURA** (90) and **CHEERY LYN** (91), Anna Mae Miller, MI, were doing well as were Hollingworth clumps of **HIGH STANDARDS** (87) and **SWEET SURRENDER** (92). Also seen here was a clump of McGarvey's **PINK HAZE** (69) and Willott's, OH. **FAIRY FINGERS** (91). This was a very large garden with many lovely plantings including wonderful hostas and TBs.

Linda Golembieski grows bearded, Siberian and Japanese Irises. I noted **SHIPS ARE SAILING**, (98) Schafer/Sacks guest, **STRAWBERRY FAIR** (94), Hollingworth, **HARBOR MIST** (83), Waite, **SILVER EDGE** (74), McEwen.

The Harold and Gayle Griffie *Orchard Country Iris Garden* had large plantings of Siberians, guests as well as their collection. **HIGH DI** (95), Aitken WA was a nice clump as well as three of the Hollingworth's; **THAT'S MY BABY** (93) ruffled deep red-violet, **BAND OF ANGELS**, (96) and **SWEET SURRENDER** (92), medium wine-red, white blaze and light-blue style arms.

The thrilling thing for the Siberian lovers was the awards' banquet when the Hollingworth's **SOMEBODY LOVES ME** was announced as the 2nd runner-up to the Franklin Cook Cup.

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### *Vince Lewonski, Pennsylvania*

This year's convention in Hunt Valley, MD was different than the last couple southern conventions, in that there were a significant number of Siberian irises there. It was close to peak bloom for Siberians in many of the gardens.

The Leader garden, a convention garden in southern PA near the Maryland border, did not have any guest Siberians. Still, there was a large established planting of their collection of Siberians which were mulched well with straw. In some respects, the Leader garden was a glimpse into the variability of microclimates. Many Siberians here were not yet in bloom, even though the same cultivars were already in full bloom in other convention gardens. For instance, **SPIRIT OF YORK**, from Region 3's own George Bush, was not yet in bloom in the Leader garden, but was blooming well at the Hornstein and Warner gardens.

The standout here was **PANSY PURPLE**, a very tall purple with red spathes. This made an outstanding clump, and actually received several votes for favorite out-of-region iris at the convention. **STRAWBERRY FAIR** was not out yet, but looked good, with lots of stalks about to pop open.

**LADY VANESSA**, a red violet bitone and **SHAKER'S PRAYER**, with its veined falls, had some stalks in the foliage. **SHAKER'S PRAYER** looked much shorter than normal and **ROARING JELLY**, a floriferous lilac and lavender, was in full bloom but had some short stalks. These were drought-related problems, and should not be held against these cultivars. There had been no rain for weeks before the convention.

My favorite was **SNOW PRINCE**, which has small, delicate near-white flowers, and six buds per stalk. Carol Warner of Draycott Gardens has told me that this cultivar may be difficult to transplant successfully. The only way she has been able to successfully sell divisions of this was to pot them up in spring, then ship the whole pot in late summer.

If you were able to attend the convention in our part of the country, I hope that you had a good time and enjoyed all of the irises you saw in bloom!

~~~~~

E. Roy Epperson, North Carolina

It was such a pleasure to see Siberian irises listed as guests in at least half of the convention gardens and to see them growing and

blooming in most of the gardens. When I visit gardens, I always look for non-iris companion plantings and especially for Siberians since so many iris growers grow mostly bearded iris. What a joy and rewarding experience it was to visit the tour gardens of *2001 Iris Odyssey*.

Bob and Judy Hollingworth's (Windwood Gardens) hybridizing efforts were well represented in the guest plantings as well as in the more established plantings. **STRAWBERRY FAIR** ('94) is heavily ruffled and has the pink color of crushed strawberries. This cultivar has moved steadily up the chart of awards and was voted the Morgan-Wood Medal this year. **BLUEBERRY FAIR** ('97) presents ruffled light blue-violet S with medium blue-violet F and multi-shaded style arms. The last of the 'fair' series is **LAVENDER FAIR** ('00). This was a listed guest, but my notes do not indicate that it was in bloom. **SOMEBODY LOVES ME** ('98) is breathtaking. This tet. is a heavily ruffled medium blue-violet with a very large white blaze on the falls. **THAT'S MY BABY** ('95) is a heavily ruffled deep red-violet. Sdlg. 97C8B15 has been named **EMILY ANNE**. This seedling bloomed on the literal birth day of this granddaughter, Emily Anne. This future introduction is a more tailored flower and presents medium blue-violet S speckled cream and F that are cream shading to yellow at the haft and outer edges dashed medium blue-purple, no signal. Sdlg. 97B1B25 is a ruffled deep-blue with white signal and light blue ruffled styles. Sdlg. 97C10A1 is a mid-blue with heavily ruffled styles. Sdlg. 97C10B4 is a flaring white. And of course, **CORONATION ANTHEM** ('90), ruffled deep-blue with large creamy-yellow blazes.

Bob Bauer and John Coble (Ensata Gardens) are presenting us with cultivars that are multi-petaled or have many petaloids. **KABLUEY** ('99) is 'hose-in-hose' form, 3 F and 6 S, then an additional 3-6 F and 6-9 S. This is a dark blue-violet with white blaze, yellow in throat. **TORNADO ROSE** ('00) gives 9-12 petals of rose-pink F with lavender-pink S curled in the center. [What a distance from **SIMPLE GIFTS** (Hollingworth '94)]. I particularly like **ROSY BOWS** ('00) for its rose-red color and white signal with bluish halo and it is heavily ruffled. **CHINA SPRING** ('99)

has light blue S with darker veins with darker blue falls. This very early bloomer out of *I. typhifolia* is well-branched and vigorous.

Marty Schaefer and Jan Sacks (Joe Pye Weed Gardens) are working on yellow bitones and selfs and color overlaying color. **SUMMER REVELS** ('99) is a ruffled bitone that is reported to be a repeat bloomer. **TOM SCHAEFER** ('00) has light yellow S and deep smooth yellow F. **SUNNY SPELLS** ('00) is a warm yellow bitone almost a self and is nicely ruffled. **FOND KISS** ('99) is a large warm white with large pink flush on the F. This can be a show-stopper! **ROARING JELLY** ('92) has pale lavender S and F that are dappled bright raspberry. **RIVERDANCE** ('97) presents rich blue flowers with heavy ruffling, a sprinkling of white on the F shoulders and white wire rims on F and styles. In my own garden, there were three perfectly placed flowers on a single bloom-stalk! Sdlg. S92-75-11 is yellow under pink with paler to pink-lilac F and ruffled style crests.

There were many old friends in these gardens:

JAYBIRD (Hager '82), light lavender-blue S and F that are near cobalt blue; **NEAT TRICK** (John White '97) has blue-violet S, dark blue-violet F splashed white with pale yellow-green signals; **SNOW PRINCE** (Tiffney '90) is from *I. sibirica* parentage and has white S, white styles, creamy ivory F and blue signal with light butterscotch markings; **ILLINI RUBY** (Varner '90), a red self with white signal; **RUFFLED VELVET** (McEwen '73), ruffled velvety reddish-purple; **SALLY KERLIN** (McEwen '70) is a clear pale blue with light violet undertone; **STEVE VARNER** (Briscoe '78) has lavender S, F are same veined lavender-blue, lightly ruffled; **HIGH DI** (Aitken '95), dark blue-purple with small gold signal and faint white rim on F and **HARBOR MIST** (Waite '83) light blue-violet self with white signal and very light blue styles. **MAGENTA MOMENT** (Helsley '92) is an excellent lightly ruffled magenta red, almost a self. His **LOUISON** ('98) is a lightly ruffled rosy wine-red with large white signal on F. My notes say 'velvety'.

It was such a delight to encounter **ETHELRED** (Zurbrigg '89) in the plantings of *Friendship Gardens* of Joan and Ken Roberts.

Here is the story. Lloyd Zurbrigg registered this cultivar in 1988. He had hesitated to introduce it because it was “unready”. **ETHELRED** was known as “Ethelred-the-Unready”. Then Lloyd lost all of his stock and the cultivar was listed as ‘unavailable’. At a fall auction of Region 4 several years ago, there were two pots of **ETHELRED**. There was spirited bidding for these and I now grow **ETHELRED** in two places in the garden. With the discovery of the clump in Joan’s garden, I now know that there are at least four gardens that grow this cultivar. Oh, by the way, **ETHELRED** is a wine-red with pale yellow signal.

Tomas Tamberg was represented with **QUIET SHAPE** (‘86), a floriferous soft dark med-blue self; **LICHTERFELDIUS** (‘97) has ruffled styles and is a pale blue with a blue and white line pattern on the F and **BERLIN PURPLE WINE** (‘93), wine-red S, velvety wine-red F with a bluish hue on signal area.

New hybridizers represented were: Michael Zarky with Sldg. 93-5-1 (now named **ZARKY ONE**), a flaring pink-lavender with aqua flash on F; and, of course, Carol Warner, who won the Morgan-Wood Medal in 1996 for **SHAKER’S PRAYER**. There were excellent clumps of her seedlings in her *Draycott Gardens*. Sdlg. 3 is a mid-violet self with ruffled styles; Sdlg. 11 is a light medium-blue with light ruffled styles; Sdlg. 12 is a large, flaring deep violet with white wire rim. Her seedlings #6, 10, 11, 12 and 14 were voted Exhibition Certificates at the Convention show.

And in my own garden this spring, the outstanding performers were: **FOND KISS**, **BERLIN PURPLE RUFFLES**, **JAYBIRD**, **SALLY KERLIN**, **STRAWBERRY FAIR**, **CHINA SPRING**, **SIMPLE GIFTS**, **MAGENTA MOMENT**, **RIVERDANCE**, all discussed above. In addition, **VIOLET JOY** (McEwen ‘80), an almost pure dark violet-blue self; **IN HER GLORY** (Silverberg ‘95), opens cream and ages to white and F have a sunny yellow throat and veining; and **BERLIN RUFFLES** (Tamburg ‘93), ruffled dark blue-violet flowers with a lovely hairline edge.

It was a good year for Siberian irises!!

STRAWBERRY FAIR

Morgan-Wood Medal Winner

by Bob Hollingworth

On one side, Strawberry Fair has blue blood in its veins since the pollen parent is Jewelled Crown, another Morgan-Wood Medal winner. The pod parent (81C2C5(T)) was a little mixed up. It came from treating seedlings from a cross of Pink Haze x Wing on Wing with colchicine, and it was a sectorial chimera. Most of the plant was diploid, but one corner was completely tetraploid. That's the part that got the pollen from Jewelled Crown. The reason for making the cross was that both parents were strongly ruffled in the standards and falls, and 81C2C5(T) had an interesting silvered pink color akin to some McGarvey irises with a similar background such as Lydia Winter and Roanoke's Choice. When the resulting 87Q cross bloomed in 1988 (having been moved from Indiana to Michigan in the interim), there were some quite attractive irises with varying forms, mainly blue-purples but some with reddish shades also. However, one stood out clearly above the rest – 87Q6C5, later named Strawberry Fair. The extravagant bubble ruffling and lovely orchid color blends distinguished it immediately from its siblings. From there it was pretty much a straight path to introduction. Along the way, Strawberry Fair garnered the Franklin Cook Cup at the 1994 AIS convention in Portland, which was the greatest surprise of my life since a beardless iris had never won this award before. We are still grateful that Dave and Nancy Silverberg grew it to cultural perfection and that the weather gods had it at display peak during the convention.

The name may seem at least a little optimistic in that the color certainly isn't strawberry red, but particularly when grown under relatively alkaline conditions, it takes on a clear pink shade that reminded us of strawberries crushed in cream. I have seen Pink Haze do the same under alkaline (pH 7.5) conditions. Anyway, this was the first of the "Fair" series, followed eventually by Blueberry and Lavender. There could be more. Strawberry Fair has proved to

be good parent and several children are lined out now for potential introduction including a pure white with similar form, a very bright red with some yellow underneath, and a red/blue mix with a white rim, 97B6B8, that received some appreciative comments at the most recent AIS convention.

NEW FROM CHANDLER FULTON

GOSSAMER BREEZE

Fulton 2001

Dainty, vigorous, floriferous and branched,
with “blueberries ‘n cream” colors.

For a color photo of this unique Siberian iris,
please see the April 2001 *AIS Bulletin*

HOSTA WATERMELON PIE

For those who saw this large and upright new hosta in
the Fulton garden during the Siberian Iris Convention
in 1996, and kept asking, it is now available.

It has a ruffled picrust edge, with ribbed leaves
watermelon striped in spring, turning leaf green in summer.

SASE for price list to **POPE’S PERENNIALS**
39 Highland Ave., Gorham, ME 04038-1701

Executive Board Meeting - May 22, 2001
Hunt Valley, Maryland

The Executive Board Meeting of the Society for Siberian Irises was called to order by President Carol Warner at 4:00 P.M. on May 22, 2001 at Hunt Valley, Maryland.

The minutes of the 2000 meeting were approved as corrected. Roy Epperson pointed out an inaccuracy regarding the dates of office for the slate of candidates as listed in the nominating committee report. It should read from Jan. 1, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2003.

Carol Warner recommended a record of minutes be kept for the society by the secretary.

The treasurer's report was given by treasurer Jim Copeland. He has put some funds into CDs to generate more income and suggested additional funds be put into CDs. \$1,000.00 was received from the proceeds of the Siberillennium held in Iowa City, Iowa in 2000.

An e-mail received from Howard Brookins suggested the price of checklists for foreign and Canadian members be raised since the current price barely covers the cost of printing and postage.

Discussion took place regarding whether RVPs and all honorary members are entitled to receive copies of TSI. Sara Marley suggested they be called complimentary copies. Judy Hollingworth will update the honorary list. Raising foreign membership dues was discussed. Domestic and foreign dues are currently the same. Last year the cost of printing 700 bulletins was \$5.90 each plus shipping. It was decided not to raise dues at this time. Ways to increased triennial memberships was considered.

Reprinting the checklist was considered. John Jones has the AIS data base for the nineties registration that could possibly be used for printing the Siberian checklist.

There are about a thousand of the Siberian promotional brochures on hand. A number of the commercial gardens listed are incorrect. Carol Warner suggested a separate insert for the commercial garden listing be used in the brochure. It was decided to reprint the brochures and separate inserts. Tom Abrego will get a quote on the cost. Roy Epperson moved that the cost not exceed

\$1500.00 to print 1,500 brochures. Bob Hollingworth seconded the motion; motion carried.

A list of display gardens will be printed in the TSI. Forty-seven display gardens are listed on the web. There are very few public display gardens. It was suggested that public display gardens should be overseen by a member of the Siberian society.

There is only an e-mail robin at the present.

Editor Ellen Gallagher reported that the spring issue of TSI is in the mail. She has had difficulty communicating with the current printer and requested permission to use a local firm from which she has received a quote to print TSI. Jim Copeland moved that this printer be tried for one issue. Roy Epperson seconded; motion carried.

There are two sets of slides with about ten requests per year. Slides of newer Siberian iris are needed.

Roy Epperson reported that the paperwork had been completed to bring the TSI bylaws into compliance with the requirements for 501 (c) 3 status and the matter was now ready to be approved by the membership.

By consensus the TSI board awarded Howard Brookins the Distinguished Service Award.

Anna Mae Miller and Sandy Ives were appointed to the nominating committee. 1st V.P. Roy Epperson is the chairman and Tom Abrego is the immediate past president.

Peter Weixlmann reminded everyone it was the last call for guest plants for the Siberian convention in 2003 in Ontario, Canada.

The meeting was adjourned.

*Officers and directors in attendance: President: Carol Warner; 1st Vice-President: E. Roy Epperson; 2nd Vice-President: Judy Hollingworth; Secretary: Marjoric Jansen; Treasurer: Jim Copeland; Directors: Tom Abrego, Jim Wilson, Katharine Steele, Ellen Gallagher (Editor)

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES GENERAL MEETING

Hunt Valley, Maryland - May 23, 2001

The Society for Siberian irises general meeting was called to order by President Carol Warner at 3:00 p.m. on May 23, 2001 at Hunt Valley, Maryland. The officers, directors and editor were introduced by Carol. She announced that the executive board, by consensus, had awarded the Distinguished Service Award to Howard Brookins of Wisconsin. Howard has served SSI for many years notably as membership secretary and overseer of the cumulative Siberian checklist.

It was noted that there are 47 Siberian display gardens for 2001.



1st V.P. E. Roy Epperson explained the benefits to be gained by attaining 501 (c) 3 status. The TSI bylaw changes necessary to meet the requirements for 501 (c) 3 status were voted on and approved by a show of hands.

Following the meeting, Roy Epperson presented a slide program on the Siberian introductions and seedlings of Jan Sacks and Marty Schafer.

Marjorie Jansen, Secretary

Siberian-Species Convention 2003

Beardless and Borderless!

Siberian 2003 Species	Convention Date: June 12-15 2003
	

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

Treasurer's Statement

By James A. Copeland

Income Statement 2000

Income		
Ads		\$ 340.00
Interest income, net of bank charges		646.36
The Siberian Iris book royalties		616.07
Membership		2,042.06
Checklists		405.00
Bulletins		48.70
Slide rental, net		8.40
	Total Income	\$4,106.59
Expenses		
Membership expenses		\$ 168.36
Checklists		1,189.29
Bulletins		55.76
Engraving medals		89.65
TSI Editors Expenses		71.75
TSI publication - Spring 2000	\$1,702.00	
- Fall 2000	1,670.00	
- color separations	765.00	
	Total	4,137.00
	Total Expenses	\$5,711.81
	Income net of expenses	(\$1,605.22)

Balance Sheet

As of 12-31-00

Assets		
Bank Accounts		
- checking	\$2,174.38	
- savings	2,981.04	
	Total	\$5,155.42
Investments		
U.S. Treasury Note 6 3/8% due 6-30-02	\$5,000.00	
Certificate of Deposit 6.65% due 9-13-02	5,000.00	
Certificate of Deposit 6.0% due 9-13-02	2,000.00	
	Total	12,000.00
	Total Assets	\$17,155.42
Liabilities, Reserves, Surplus, General Surplus		
	Total	\$17,155.42

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

My name is Carlos Beca and I just joined the Siberian Iris Society.

I am writing because I read the article 'In Memoriam - Julius Wadekamper' and noticed that the word 'Borbeleta' is translated as butterfly. I also noticed this same word associated with the name of a Iris vendor.

I just would like to clarify that the word butterfly in Portuguese is spelled 'Borboleta' and not 'Borbeleta'. This may sound picky but it is to avoid confusion of names in the future. The real name may very well be 'Borbeleta', but if it is, does not mean butterfly.

Best Regards,

Carlos Beca
Edmonton - Alberta - Canada

Carlos, thank you for writing. The registered name of this iris is 'Borbeleta' as you noted. A hybridizer can name an iris almost anything as long as the name has not been used for another iris registered with the American Iris Society.

~~~~~  
**TSI welcomes questions/comments:**

**Ellen Gallagher, Editor**  
**1689 Main St.**  
**Berlin, NH 03570**  
**USA**  
**e-mail: ellengalla@yahoo.com**

## ADVERTISING RATES

*A source list for Siberians is printed in the spring issue of TSI at a cost of \$5.00 per listing. Please send your check, made payable to the Society for Siberian Irises, to the editorial office at: 1689 Main St., Berlin, NH 03570 by February 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.*

### Other Rates:

|                                                        |                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>FULL PAGE COLOR 4" x 7" .....</b>                   | <b>no charge</b> |
| <b>(color separation to be provided by advertiser)</b> |                  |
| <b>FULL PAGE B&amp;W 4" x 7" .....</b>                 | <b>\$50.00</b>   |
| <b>HALF PAGE B&amp;W 4" x 3 1/2" .....</b>             | <b>30.00</b>     |
| <b>1/4th PAGE B&amp;W 4" x 1 1/2" .....</b>            | <b>20.00</b>     |

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## SIBERIAN IRIS SLIDE SET

***SLIDE SETS ARE SUITABLE FOR A CLUB PROGRAM ARE AVAILABLE AT \$5.00 PER RENTAL FROM:***

**BOB HOLLINGWORTH  
124 SHERWOOD RD., EAST  
WILLIAMSTON, MI 48895**

**Please make check payable to R. M. Hollingworth**

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# THE SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

*Section of the American Iris Society*

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## COMMITTEES

---

### *Display Gardens:*

1) **Bill Smoot**, 213 Derby Rd, Portsmouth, VA 23702; (757)393-4617;  
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2) **Bill Dougherty**, 7420 Concerto Curve, Fridley, MN 55432  
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**Membership: Linda Doffek**, 5547 Jacqueline Dr., West Bend, WI  
53095-9725; (262)334-1128; **LDoffekSSI@aol.com**

### *Nominating Committee:*

1) **Sandy Ives**, 1077 Guertin Ave  
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2) **Anna Mae Miller**, 1700 Bronson Way, Apt 177, Kalamazoo MI,  
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**Publicity: Tom Abrego**

**Robins: Michael Zarky**, 10963 Citrus Dr., Moorpark,  
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**Registrations & Awards: Howard Brookins**

**Research: Bob Hollingworth**, (same as Judy Hollingworth)

**Slides: Bob Hollingworth**

## **SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES:**

Membership is open to all AIS members in the United States and Canada and to all iris fanciers elsewhere. Send your dues to the Membership Secretary, Linda Doffek at: 5547 Jacqueline Dr., West Bend, WI 53095-9725. (262)334-1128 or **LDoffekSSI@aol.com**

|                            |         |                  |         |
|----------------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| <b>Dues:</b> Single Annual | \$ 5.00 | Family Annual    | \$ 6.00 |
| Single Triennial           | 13.00   | Family Triennial | 15.00   |
| Single Life                | 100.00  | Family Life      | 120.00  |

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**Back cover: Roberts' garden, photo by Jim Morris.**

**Inside back cover: Top - Lake Keuka (Borglum '94).  
Photo by Dana Borglum.**

**Bottom, Harpswell Velvet (McEwen '91).  
Photo by Chandler Fulton.**



