



# Twin City Iris Society

## News and Views

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A tall stately blue iris is a pleasure to behold. There are several, and eleven of them have been described by Roger Nelson in the April issue of the Bulletin of the American Iris Society. My choice is 'Parisian Blue'. It is a clear blue with no other colors present, the blue of a spring sky. The form is exquisite and the falls wide with just the right flare. Among the beauties in blue irises, 'Parisian Blue' by Schreiners ranks with me as one of the best.

I will not be able to attend the May meeting. Glenn Hanson will take charge. The voting on the amendment for a name change will take place at this meeting. Voting will be conducted by secret ballot. If a name change is approved it would not become effective until October 1971 at the annual banquet. This would enable us to celebrate the 20th anniversary under the present name.

Mr. and Mrs. Mutterer are co-chairman for the garden tours this year. This social event should be great fun. Bud and 'Ceil' are working on the arrangements and itinerary now. The date will be determined by the season. Possible considerations are the Sunday before the show, the Sunday after the show, or even a weekday evening. With daylight time it should be possible to take in several gardens. Your ideas and suggestions will be welcome at the May meet.

I would like all members of our Society who are not members of the American Iris Society to consider joining. We need a 20% increase in our AIS membership this year. A fine goal would be for each AIS member to recruit one new member. The membership dues are \$7.50 but, as in our local organization, the dues are more than compensated for by the benefits. The fellowship with our AIS friends from Wisconsin at the Annual meeting at West Salem, Wisconsin is great. Minnesota was well represented there at a very fine meeting last month.

The publications committee and consultants has completed a sheet entitled Twin City Iris Society Information For Garden Clubs. The culture sheet Growing Irises in Minnesota is being prepared and will be available at the annual June Show.

We continue to emphasize new memberships. We are interested in members from outside the Twin City area as well and would like to be of service to all in the State interested in growing irises. I would be very much interested in hearing from outstate members on how we can increase outstate membership and how we can be of service.

Much will take place in the following weeks. The Early Show, The New York Convention of the American Iris Society, The June Show, and our Iris Tours. We will need all the specimens and arrangements possible from everyone. Remember the change in schedule for the June meeting. It will be Wednesday June 10 at 6:30 P.M. at the Swiss Chalet on 5201 Excelsior Blvd. with Clark Cosgrove as our guest. We hope every member will cooperate in his own way in these events and have a lot of fun and fellowship in doing so.

- Julius Wadekamper  
May, 1970

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### THE "EARLY IRIS SHOW" -- May 17

Community Room of the Guaranty State Bank, 3700 W. Broadway, 12N to 6PM  
Open for entries 6AM to 9:30AM.

### REGULAR MEETING -- May 21 - 8 PM - Guaranty State Bank

The earliest irises of the season are the miniature dwarf bearded which normally start blooming in this area in late April and are under ten inches in height. These little gems will be featured at the May meeting of the Twin City Iris Society when slides from the Dwarf Iris Society of America will be shown. This set of slides is as excellent and authoritative as are available on any classification of irises. Included will be species, rare species hybrids, recent award winners, newer varieties, and introductions scheduled from 1970 and later.

- Charlotte Sindt

### EARLY IRISES GARDEN TOUR - May 23.

Details will be given at the May Meeting, or you may call Cecelia Muttterer for further information. Telephone - 545-7607

### THE JUNE SHOW -- June 6 and 7 in the Southdale Garden Court.

### NOTICE ---

SHOW SCHEDULES WILL NOT BE MAILED OUT THIS YEAR. Anyone desiring a schedule may get one at the May meeting, or from Carol Lankow, 139 Glen Creek Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55421 Telephone - 784-8908

- TIP -

Good sportsmanship involves honest rivalry, courtesy, consideration for others, diplomacy, grace to accept the judges decisions, whatever they may be. For often we learn more from our mistakes than we do from our successes.

Good sportsmanship allows us to accept defeat and even success with graciousness and understanding. It is a quality that is needed to enjoy the competition of flower shows and to face all the challenges of life more easily.

- submitted by Agnes Johnson

Members will be interested to learn that Lois Johnson's article "The Birds and the Bees and the Flowers" has been printed in the April 1970 issue of the Minnesota Horticulturist. She has also received a request for permission to print in the Oklahoma Regional Bulletin.

### PLANTING OF IRIS SEEDS --

Growing irises from seeds is not difficult if certain conditions are observed. Plant the seeds Sept. 20 in rows 30 inches apart so they can be cultivated like the rest of the flowers. Our irises are in one area in the garden, not mixed with other flowers.

Mark the rows, put in bone meal and gypsum, plant the iris seeds - put short metal stakes all along, then cover the seeds. The metal stakes are to show the exact row for spring so we can water the seeds so they do not get dry anytime, or the seeds will not germinate. After they start to come up, they will all be up in a short time. We always have good germination and do not reset the little plants as any root damage will prevent it blooming the following year.

We plan to have 1000 seedlings a year. Cultivation is important for good growth. We count the seeds of each cross so we know the percentage of germination. As they bloom we mark the good ones and dig out all the rest - then reset the choice ones in a row.

- Alice Bakke

Are irises vulnerable to leaf spot when grown next to peonies? For several years leaf spot was a problem on 'Pacific Panorama', 'Mixed Emotions' and 'Witch Doctor'. They were growing next to peony bushes. Other irises did not seem to be bothered. 'Pacific Panorama' was clean in another part of the garden. - Gabe



## IRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

By O. A. Bakke

If I were an expert on Iris photography, more of my Iris slides would be better. However, in response to the request in the stepped up member participation in our Iris Society program this year, I will try to set forth some things in connection with my activity in the field of Iris photography. This Iris blossom is not the easiest flower to take a good picture of when it is standing in the garden surrounded by other blooms and buds.

I have 2 cameras both with built in light or exposure meters. One has a narrow beam eye mounted in the lens retaining ring. This camera can be operated on so - called automatic as well as manually, and has an F 1.9 lens. The other is a Kodak Retina Reflex with a wide angle F 2.8 lens and has a built-in photocell exposure meter. I prefer to use the Reflex camera and always use it when the distance is less than 3 feet. With this one there isn't any parallax problem even when one or even two close-up lenses are used. What is seen in the view-finder is exactly what will be recorded on the film as the viewing is directly thru the lens. I like to take close-up pictures of individual stalks or blossoms. By using one close-up lens, I can get as near as about 13 inches to the blossom, and by using two close-up lenses, as close as about 7 inches.

When the light is good (sunshine) I usually use a 1/125 sec shutter speed and if there is a breeze, then 1/125 sec is a must. The slightly less depth of field in 1/125 sec shutter speed as compared with using 1/60 sec isn't important when photographing a single stalk or clump. Speaking of depth of field, when using one, and especially when using two close-up lenses, there isn't any depth of field so the focusing gets to be all important. It is either in focus or it isn't - with no leeway. In fact, when a single bloom is in sharp focus, everything else that might show on the slide will be out of focus and often provides a pleasing background contrast.

I prefer using Kodachrome II film which has a speed of 25. This film gives a fine grain picture and I feel that the flower colors are faithfully reproduced. I have used some Kodachrome X film which has a speed of 64. This is also a very satisfactory film to use. Have tried High Speed Ektachrome which has a speed of 160 but I do not like this for flower slides.

I have tried using portable backgrounds made of paper board. I made up 5 or 6 of these and painted them different colors so I could choose the one giving the best contrast to the color of the flower being photographed. These worked fine except for one thing. Oftentimes it was impossible to place this board behind the flower I wanted to photograph without damaging other blooms and buds in the same clump. Also it was necessary to have someone help in placing and holding these, so last year I didn't use them at all.

I have found that the medium to real dark colors photographed well in bright sun, but for the light colors I prefer a cloudy bright lighting, or shade. As there are no shadows when it is cloudy, the picture can be taken from any side or angle and the danger of "washing out" the light colors is removed. Picture taking should be avoided when temperatures are high enough to cause the blossom to droop, and also when the wind is strong enough to cause the blossom to sway back and forth. Also photographing a damaged blossom or one that is past its peak will be disappointing. The picture cannot be better than the flower and oftentimes is much worse. I have never been able to take a light blue Iris in any kind of light that I have been satisfied with.

- Continued

(Con't- Iris Photography)

Some of us may have camera equipment that is so sophisticated that we have never learned how to use some of the features. Then along comes someone and takes a picture with a \$12.98 camera with excellent results, except of course for the real close-ups. Sometimes we seem to be in just the right mood for picture-taking and do everything just right, whereas the next time it doesn't go so well, but I for one would not want to stop taking pictures.

CREATE A BLUE RIBBON ARRANGEMENT FOR THE IRIS SHOW AT SOUTHDAL

By Agnes Johnson (Mrs. Carl E.)

As you search for ways to develop your own novel ideas, remember that unfamiliar plant material used with your favorite iris frequently presents an original note. So does familiar plant material used in an unexpected fashion. An abundance of natural plant material is available to you in the wilds, roadsides and fields. Dock is one of the most versatile, in the green, beige and brown stages of development. Mullein is another stately weed and its leaves condition well. Develop a seeing eye as you walk or ride through the country-sides. Be creative and look for what is available--interesting texture and form, unusual shape and curves.

Containers not primarily meant for flowers can also add a distinctive touch. Try sculptured wood, a porcelain lamp base, or take old containers, candlesticks, inexpensive pottery and spray them with dull paint. Or better still, make your own.

Imagination is the spice of today's tempo, which stimulates us anew and brings freshness to our routine life. A little imagination can convert a monotonous and uninteresting flower arrangement into one that is novel and exciting. All you need is the inspiration. Try to do something you haven't done before -- stir out of your usual groove.

A prize-winning flower arrangement has a quality that sets it apart. It says "I am different, I am superior, I am outstanding." This extra vibrant quality of personal expression is distinction. How can you achieve it? By using unusual but related plant material, unusual but pleasing color harmonies, superior craftsmanship and above all, with simplicity, restraint and dignity.

The schedule is the law of the show. Read it thoroughly, make a mental note of the theme and the classes you wish to enter. Reread your specific class, and if you have any doubt what is asked for, check with the schedule chairman. Adherence to the schedule will eliminate the possibility of losing unnecessary points, particularly in the following categories -- conformity to schedule, compatibility of all materials, condition and design. Above all, adhere to the principles of design which are:

Balance - visual stability

Dominance - more of one than others

Contrast - placing elements together in such a way as to emphasize their differences

Rhythm - the smooth flow of material and color which carries the eye easily through the design

Proportion - the relationship of one part of your arrangement to another, to the whole, and the space it occupies.

Scale - the size relationships of the component parts of your arrangement.

If you should not get a blue ribbon, perhaps the judge didn't get your message. If she did, you're lucky! Win or lose, you will have fun trying.



## CHEMICAL WEED CONTROLS

By Wilbert Sindt

The use of chemicals has increased many times for all of us in the past few decades. They have caused a great deal of controversy and books have been written both upholding and condemning their use in our everyday life. Some people, knowing that I use certain chemicals for weed control, have asked "How persistent are they?" I think a means of judging the persistence of any chemical used is how long does it "protect". The great advantage of DDT was the fact that it protected or remained effective against insects for a long period of time. This is also its greatest disadvantage because it does not break down into harmless elements but remains potent for a long time. (Too long we now know.)

A number of different chemicals may be used for weed control. The first one any number of us has used was 2-4-D, which is very effective against dandelions and other broad-leaved plants. This along with it's more potent relative 2-4-5T is effective against broad-leaved plants and does not distinguish between what we may call "weeds" or desirable plants. Even in the plants 2-4-D controls, some are much more susceptible than others. Narrow leaved plants, such as grass, are essentially untouched by it. I would guess that iris would not be affected, though I have not tried it and do not know.

The next weed control chemical many of us have used, though we may not know it, is Dacthal. This is usually the crabgrass controlling agent in "Weed and Feed" lawn care programs. This chemical prevents the germination of certain seeds, and especially crabgrass. Dacthal is the weed control chemical that I have used with some success on irises, glads, carrots, onions, and some other flowers and vegetables.

My procedure in the use of Dacthal is to have the garden clean and free of all weeds after the plants are well established. The time of application is around July 1. I apply it only to the row or a band on each side about six inches wide. This takes care of the difficult weeds between the plants in the row. Between the rows, I either have a mulch or cultivate. Directions should be followed carefully for amount to apply. I have worked out a formulation that is satisfactory for me. A regular garden sprayer is used for application, and the ground covered so that it looks dark to me. I determined how much area one gallon of water would cover (by actually spraying it out) and then calculated how much Dacthal should be used on that area. I have not found any plants that are adversely affected by my treatment, but I'm sure there are some, since my use has been on a limited number of species.

Krag Herbicide #1 is another weed control that I have used. The effectiveness of this material to me did not seem enough to merit using it. I did have some adverse effects on newly transplanted marigolds, much better control on the marigolds than on the weeds.

There are many chemical weed controls used commercially (especially in gladiolus) and in agriculture. Most of the products seem to me to be quite specific - they control only one type of plant or they control all but one type. 2-4-D is an example of the former type which is control of broad-leaved plants. Atrazine (ask Glenn Hanson) controls most plants except corn. So this makes it outstanding for use on corn, but with the right kind of weather conditions it still has an effect on the oats which may follow the corn the next year. I know that Treflan is used in some large flower gardens with success, though certain types of plants are affected. Dalpon is effective against grass, and is used on plantation evergreens and to clear fence rows - it should also eliminate irises.

If you plan to use a chemical weed control, I would advise:

1. follow directions;
2. use it the first year on plants you can afford to lose;
3. remember that weather conditions may be a very important factor;
4. keep records so that you know what you did.

For me, the use of Dacthal has been a help.

Please add these members to your yearbook-

Mrs. C. W. Clark 923 Bemidji Ave. Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

Mr. Melvin Bausch 11530 No. Laguna Drive, 21 West Mequon, Wisconsin 53092

Mr. Fred Strom 516 - 67 Ave No, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55430

### IRIS FORRESTII

by Jean Witt

I. forrestii, of the Siberian section, is a favorite with species buffs in the Seattle area. Collected by the plant explorer George Forrest in the mountains of Yunnan, it was described by Dykes in 1910 and is pictured in color in his famous monograph.

As we grow it in Seattle, it varies in height from about one foot to nearly three feet. The flowers are about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 inches across, and a little longer than wide, because of the typically drooping falls. The standards tilt outward, while the outer ends of the style arms hover over the falls at almost right angles to their bases. The best forms are a bright butter yellow with a pattern of intermittent black dotting in the signal area. The stems rise well above the grassy foliage, which is completely deciduous in winter. Rhizomes resemble those of garden Siberians.

As might be expected of meadow plants, I. forrestii requires full sun and plenty of water during the growing season. If their site becomes too dry or shady they dwindle and fail to bloom. In the Seattle area we usually move or divide them in the fall, but spring moving would probably be preferred in your area. Our climate is no test of their hardiness--so can only say to you--experiment. Plants come easily from seed, and bloom the second or third year. They do not seem to be particular about soil.

Besides the type, we grow a tall handsome variant with no trace of black markings, the flowers a clear spectrum yellow with an increase in color over the signal area. This one blooms somewhat later than the others. I. forrestii, as with most of the 40 chromosome Siberians, blooms a week or so later than the peak of the TB season. If left undisturbed, it soon forms large clumps. Since it has only two flowers per stem, the blooming period may seem short compared to that of bearded irises but all the stalks in a clump will not open simultaneously.

Because I. forrestii hybridizes readily with other species of the 40 chromosome Siberians, especially I. chrysographes, open pollinated garden seed often does not come true to type. Some clones in current circulation--particularly those which are conspicuously spotted--are actually advance generation hybrid segregates. Unless one is a purist, this is really an advantage. Such seedlings provide variety not only in color, but also in height and date of bloom. A number of interesting "Chrysofor" seedlings were described and named by Perry in the 1920's, including a yellow amoena. None of these seems to be extant today, but hybridizers would do well to watch for their re-occurrence.

I. forrestii can also be crossed by hand pollination with species of the Californicae, producing vigorous, though sterile, flowers of considerable garden value. Cal-Sibes may well be one of the outstanding beardless iris groups of the future.

- Author Jean Witt grows a half dozen species Siberians in her garden. She is Vice-president of the MTB (Table) Section of the Median Iris Society.