

Twin City Iris Society

-News and Views-

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February, 1963

As you remember from our last News & Views, our meetings from now on will be on the third Thursday of each month instead of the fourth Thursday as it has been previously. So this month our meeting will be Thursday, February 21, at 8:00 P.M. at the usual meeting place, the Minneapolis Y.W.C.A., 12th & Nicollet. We hope that this change of date will accommodate more of you and that we will have more members active than ever.

The program for this meeting sounds as though it should be very interesting — let Alice Stenoien, our Program Chairman, tell you about it:

Our program for February should be of interest to all our members as we will have the privilege of meeting and hearing Peggy Schulz talk to us on the new Daylilies and Irises, as well as seeing her slides of the newer varieties.

The name, Peggy Schulz, is a familiar one to readers of garden magazines. She is the Garden Club editor of Flower and Garden magazine and wrote a gardening column for the Mpls. Herald. She has written a number of books on Houseplants and is at present working on a book on Daylilies.

We are indeed fortunate to have her living in our city so that we are able to secure her as a guest speaker. I hope all our members will be present as we will want to show our appreciation by presenting her a good audience. Bring a guest if you can, but be sure not to miss this opportunity to hear this talented and charming speaker.

Don't forget to look about and see if you have a door prize around somewhere.

. . . Alice Stenoien

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

If we needed reassurance about what kind of a year our society is going to have in 1963, I think our January meeting provided it. Everyone knows that Minnesotans are a hardy lot, but I confess I had serious misgivings when our meeting night turned out to be so cold and disagreeable. However, I might have spared myself the worry because we had a large and enthusiastic attendance, and those who braved the weather were rewarded with one of Mr. Holst's authoritative and educational presentations. I always get a feeling of admiration for his informal, effortless style of speaking, delivered without notes and apparently off the cuff, but completely organized. Here, I feel, is a man who knows whereof he speaks, not because he reads it, but because he does it.

A few days after the meeting my telephone rang, and who should be on the other end of it but our good friend Miss Ada Anderson, back out of the hospital and apparently well on the road to recovery. She said she wanted to thank somebody for the plant that the society sent, and not knowing who else to call, she called the president. I replied that if she wanted to thank the person responsible for it she would have to thank the whole society, because the idea just sort of spontaneously developed during the coffee session after the meeting. So — to all those who gathered around the front table and cooked up this little gesture, and to all those who didn't happen to be there but who certainly would have been of the same mind if they had been there — in other words, to the whole society, I pass along Miss Anderson's thanks.

President's Letter, cont'd

Under the able leadership of Marge LaCroix, our show plans are shaping up rapidly. A meeting of several of the sub-committees has been scheduled and there will undoubtedly be further developments to report at the February meeting. This year's show will mark a sort of coming-of-age for our society, partly because we will be initiating some new slants in the exhibits, and partly because we will be picking up a lot of our own expense that has been paid for us in the past. We are wide open for any happy proposals for financing this project. One suggestion has been made that there may be business firms who would be willing to pick up the cost of one or more awards in exchange for appropriate publicity. Any ideas, anyone?

Just in case you have forgotten, this is the time of year to inspect your tender bulbs in their winter storage. I went through mine a few days ago and tossed out some potential trouble makers. This is an ideal job for a cold, winter day, because handling your bulbs calls up pleasant memories of past gardens and happy anticipation for the future. I began years ago to accumulate some of the less common bulbs, many of which are highly exotic in the garden but seldom seen. For example, this past summer I bloomed a eucomis. It was quite an event because I raised four of these bulbs from seeds five years ago and have been nursing them along ever since. Other pets that appear in my garden every year include galtonias, tigridias, acidantheras, ismenes, zephyranthes, and others. They're all great attention getters and deserve to be more commonly grown.

G. F. Hanson, President

Mr. Gable was very kind early this year in sending me several observations that he thought might be of interest and help to the members to use when I had room for them in the News & Views. We are very grateful for these articles because we know they will help the members in their culture of iris and other flowers. We would appreciate observations and experiences from any of you; it might be just what someone else is looking for.

Notes from G. B. Gable:

A DRY SOIL CONDITION

Today is Dec. 19th and the soil has not had rain or snow since the snow of Nov. 23rd. Where there is no hay or leaves, the ground is dry and so loose I can move it with the toe of my shoe. Where packed, the ground is cracking. This will mean heavy losses next spring... from dehydration unless we get moisture real soon. Was tempted to break out the hose and water the evergreens and deciduous daylilies that I did not cover.

Yesterday I dusted the entire lawn with Terraclor to prevent snow mold forming this winter. Snow mold can do a lot of damage to a bent grass lawn when heavy snows stay all winter. I presume the neighbors thought I was a little "tetched in the haid" and if they should see me out there today with the hose watering the garden they would think I was balmy for sure.

USE OF BOARDS, FLAT STONES, ETC. TO HOLD MOISTURE

Did you ever notice how well a clump of iris performs when planted next to a large stone? The roots will be directly under the stone and the soil real moist. Old boards can serve the same purpose. I had difficulty growing rhizomes of a satisfactory size on Firedance to please customers until I placed old boards on each side of the row. I also lined out some real small rhizomes of Zebra when the soil was very dry and placed old boards on each side of the row. Results were amazing. I have read that the same results can be obtained by cutting old corrugated paper boxes into strips of the proper size and weighting down the corners with soil. The writer claimed it kept down weeds while holding the moisture. I learned my lesson using newspapers for a mulch. They went to pieces and the garden was a mess to clean up.

. . . G. B. Gable

Mrs. Alice Bakke is in the midst of a most interesting experiment. She potted some iris to see if she could make them bloom in the house and also to see what quality the bloom would be. She reports success in that she has a bloom-stalk with several buds developing and has been having a lot of fun measuring it to see how much it grows in a day. Tops, so far, is four inches in one day. It's growing so fast she has to measure it several times some days to keep up with it. I, for one, am very anxious to see it when it blooms.

Flash! I just called and received the surprising news that the iris has two open blooms and the stalk is 32 inches tall. The bloom size is average, probably a little smaller than if it had bloomed outdoors. She is now debating as to how to handle it after it finishes blooming; whether to force it into dormancy and then replant it outside in the spring or whether to let it continue growing and then transplant it. Congratulations to Mrs. Bakke on a successful and interesting experiment. She tells me, too, that Dr. Rueben David has some iris growing. This is a nice way to grow them, she says, "No aphids and no leaf spot."

Remember the meeting - 8:00 P.M., Thursday, February 21. I understand our speaker, Peggy Schultz, is a most vivacious and charming speaker, as well as being exceptionally well informed. You won't want to miss her. See you there !!
