

Twin City Iris Society

NEWS and VIEWS

Vol. XII, Book 5

May, 1964

May is bustin' out all over!!! I know the song says June--but the way things have been growing the last week--well, things are just "bustin' out all over." There are not enough hours in the day to do everything that must be done during these days of rapid growth, especially when the rain and wind on many days keep us from accomplishing what we should. But isn't it a joy to participate in and witness the miracle of the earth once more springing to life?

The May meeting of the Twin City Iris Society will be held at the usual meeting place, the YWCA at Twelfth and Nicollet in Minneapolis, Thursday, May 21, at 8:00 P.M. The program will consist of hints, ideas and instruction in show techniques and arranging so we may all participate in the annual Iris show June 6 and 7th. More about that follows from our President, and Show co-chairman, Dr. Frank Halleck--we expect a large turn out for this meeting--show schedules will be passed out and name tags and entry tickets will be available. For those of you who have never shown, this meeting will be invaluable. Bring any questions you have and we will try to answer them. We want you to enter our show!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In April the winter covering of Iris was removed and prospects are for a good Iris year. All members gave a favorable report.

Mr. Gus Sindt gave one of the most inspiring talks on the growing of Iris. It is no wonder we all came away from the meeting thinking of the fantasy he told of "the rainbow breaking and falling to earth and where each little particle fell a beautiful flower sprang up, and it was known as the Iris." Portions fell on your gardens and in a few weeks those lovely blossoms will be carried to the Iris Show, June 6 and 7th.

If the weather is kind to us this year, the show should be one of the best. Let us all participate in the displaying of the Iris at the showroom of the American Hardware Mutual Insurance Company, 3033 Excelsior Boulevard.

The Constitution of the T.C.I.S. says in Article II:

"The object of the Society is to promote the culture and further the improvement of Iris. . . .

a. To hold Annual Iris Shows.

b. To stimulate and support civic beautification plantings. . . "

Etc.

To the knowledge of the Society, this is being done and now comes the announcement of planting Iris in two of the city parks. Arrangements have been made with the Park Board that Iris be planted at the Rose Gardens and the gardens across from the Guthrie Theater, "The Old Armory Gardens." This park planting is a civic beautification program and does not conflict with any other project.

Since this is a major undertaking the entire Society is called upon to participate in providing the necessary rhizomes for the planting. A list of Iris is enclosed in this Newsletter that can be of assistance to you in selecting rhizomes. You may have other good Iris you wish to donate. I am asking that you submit to the President a list of names and number of your rhizomes at the May 21st meeting that will be available for donation for the Park planting. Only by this means will we have an advance inventory of the number and varieties we can expect.

Plans will be drawn and rhizomes from different donors we be assembled on paper, whether you have one or one hundred, we gratefully accept. We then will assemble the four to seven grouping and in July you will be contacted for the number actually needed.

It must be remembered that our Iris Auction will also be the latter part of July. We must have rhizomes as we rely on the proceeds to finance our organization. Keep this in mind and use your own judgment when deciding on donations.

This may seem some what optimistic, but all working together this can be accomplished.

The heavy loss of Iris some years ago has been replaced by newer and better varieties. It is time we have civic plantings to show this magnificent Iris, to have it enjoyed by countless hundreds that visit the parks.

The program for this meeting is not only timely but most instructive. One of the features of the Iris Show is flower arranging. This artistic arrangements are a joy to all. Flower arranging will be demonstrated.

The valuable instruction we will receive at this meeting on selecting, cutting and transporting Iris to the show will be most appreciated. Anyone that exhibits Iris knows that 5 o'clock in the morning comes early on June 6th.

Use this knowledge and have patience.

Greta

I R I S S H O W N E A R S

Come and participate in the Iris Show! The days are becoming closer and closer for us Iris lovers because soon we will be approaching the day on which we can display our horticultural babies. The Iris Show will take place on June 6 and 7th in the American Hardware Mutual Insurance Company building, which is located at 3033 Excelsior Boulevard in Minneapolis. Perhaps the easiest way to find the building is to go to Lake Calhoun as the insurance company is on the banks of the lake. Last year's show was really a great one, but this year we can surely promise it will be even greater because we have many exciting things in store for you. We all hope that everybody--all of the members of the Twin City Iris Society--will pitch in and make this the best show yet.

Just to show you some of the highlights on this year's planning, we will have our Court of Honor, which all of you know are the best awarded winning Irises that have been selected by our highly qualified Iris judges from Irises grown by YOU.

The plans for the flower arrangements are going to be exciting this year

because we are using the theme, "Summertime," from "Porgy and Bess." Schedules will indicate the various kinds of flower arrangements that we would like to have in our show. We are hoping that all of you members--professional, amateur, novices, and just plain flower lovers--make an attempt to enter the flower arrangement section because all of these are works of art and show how much you appreciate the efforts of your horticultural endeavors. Remember that this is open to each and everyone of you, and we hope that you will enter one or more arrangements in the flower arrangement section for our Iris Show to really make it the biggest and best show we have ever had.

As far as the educational exhibits are concerned, we are going to have excellent ones again this year. We are going to have displays of two types. One will be presented by Mr. Walter Carlock that will show the importance of the Dyke's Medal and how the award is achieved as well as the Irises which have won them throughout the years. Some of you have already seen part of his display and know what a wonderful educational presentation this will be for you and the public. The other educational exhibit will consist of demonstrations of growing, culturing, and divisions of Irises. This perhaps will be one of the most exciting areas because both you and the public will see the correct ways to grow and increase your rhizome supply. Special brochures will be available to you and our guests on the proper methods for culturing Irises.

Perhaps one of the new things of this year's show is that we are going to have a separate part of our schedule for entries of Iris stalks of the Dyke's Medal winners. This is designed to get these Irises in one group where they can be judged for the best of the show. Both you and the public will see the Dyke's Medal Irises that we can grow here and as they appear in coloration as grown in our Minnesota soils. The same type of judging will be used for this group as for the other entries.

There will be a number of beautiful, professional exhibits by local landscape artists in our show this year, and I am sure all of you will be in awe when you see what they have planned. I am going to hold you in suspense because the excitement of seeing these exhibits will greatly add to your participation in the show.

The Twin City Iris Society, as you all know, is made up of people--you and I--and in order to make it a real success, all of us should do everything possible to make this Iris Show the best show we have ever had. True, many of us do not have as many Irises and varieties to select from as others, but we are certainly proud of those which we do have, and each and everyone of them certainly has merit. Why not all of us try to enter at least ten stalks of our best Irises into the competition? I am sure most of you will be surprised that you will have the opportunity of getting ribbons because remember everyone's Irises are exposed to the same climatic conditions, and maybe your Irises have slightly better growth conditions and may succeed in winning ribbons.

Help! Help! Help! We are calling for help from each and every member of the Society to set up the show. We need volunteers to set up the tables and get some of the exhibits lined up on Friday night, June 5. Anyone who can devote a few hours of his time to this preparation, please call Mrs. LaCroix (LI.5-8151), and tell her when and how much time you can devote to helping us on Friday night to get everything ready for our big days, Saturday - June 6, and Sunday - June 7.

(over)

The Twin City Iris Show is nearing--come one - come all!! And participate in the show because the show is not made up of a few, but is made up of each and everyone of you members of the Twin City Iris Society. See you there!

Frank E. Halleck

"SPICE" FOR THE SUMMER GARDEN

Annuals are the "spice" of the summer and early autumn garden, supplying the much needed color that was so generously given by the early spring bulbs and the perennials which, with a very few exceptions, are at this time having their dull moments. The bulb foliage is drying and withered, perennial plants are past their most attractive period, many entering a state of dormancy, a few will add foliage contrasts and background for the gay colored annuals that will defy midsummer heat and bridge the gap between the very welcome blossoms of early spring and the riot of color presented by the mums and fall flowering perennials.

For the gardener annuals are plants that complete their life cycle in a single season. The plant begins as a seed, germinates, reaches maturity, flowers, produces seed, and dies naturally within the period of a year--or between the last frost of spring and the first frost of fall. The experienced gardener recognizes three classes of annuals, those that are hardy, half-hardy and tender. The hardy annuals can withstand a certain amount of frost and the seeds can be sown in the open ground in early spring, some can be sown in the late fall. The tender annuals, however, cannot stand the chill of May or September nights and cannot be sown out-of-doors until the soil is warm and danger of frost is past. The half-hardy annuals are susceptible to frost but can stand cool weather; these can be planted directly in the ground in the middle of the spring sowing season--about when the apple trees are in full bloom. There is no hard and fast rule classifying these three groups, especially in the half-hardy group as local conditions, soil composition, and even the position of planting in the garden will be a factor in the classification.

As a group, annuals are sun loving plants, although a few will thrive in partial shade. They are not too particular about soil conditions, many are entirely indifferent, and a few will grow well on poor soils. However, adequate preparation will reward the gardener with better plant growth and more bloom. The hardy annuals can be sown in early spring where they are to bloom, or in nursery beds for transplanting later. The soil must be in suitable condition before seeding, firm and raked down finely. Many annual seeds are very tiny and if planted in soil made up of large particles will be lost in an air pocket and dried out. The finer the seed, the finer the tilth of the soil must be. Depth of sowing depends on the size of the seed, in general the depth is twice the diameter of the seed. After sowing, the soil should be watered with a fine spray and must not be allowed to dry out until after germination and the young plants have become well established. In the open ground it is impossible to control temperatures and moisture, heavy rains wash out seeds or compact the soil too firmly, or hot sun and winds dry the soil too quickly, forming a hard crust. It is easier to control these factors in a specially prepared seed bed in which sand, pulverized peat moss and compost are worked into the top three inches of soil. The seed bed should be in a well-drained location, perhaps raised a few inches above the surrounding area.

The half-hardy annuals are sown out about a month later than the hardies, or

a bit earlier if in a favorably protected or sheltered spot. For maximum period of bloom these should be started earlier indoors or plants should be purchased from your nurseryman.

Tender annuals are sown at corn planting time, when the nights have lost their chill and the soil is warm. Many of these require a long growing season and must be started long before outside conditions are favorable. Among these are ageratum, lobelia, and petunia, seeds of these should be started indoors in March.

Annuals can be chosen to fill practically any need in a garden, whether it be for a tall background, a low edging, a window box, to cover a dry bank, for cutting, for foliage effect, to add color to a perennial border, to grow in containers or pots, or for house plants!

Mrs. J. F. Lavacot

PAINT YOUR MIDSUMMER BORDERS WITH DAYLILY COLOR

By

Rev. Eldren W. Minks, Regional Vice President
American Hemerocallis Society
Albert Lea, Minnesota

Need more color in your midsummer border? Then daylilies are for you. No other perennial can match their ability to withstand heat, drought, and general inattention as can daylilies. The specie is botanically known as hemerocallis, a term that has been mistakenly associated with hemoglobin. In fact, the American Hemerocallis Society is reported to have received a donation intended for a "blood" charity.

Aside from the very early-blooming specie-clones that add attraction to the Iris border in June, the midseason July bloomers are the most productive, flowerwise. It is the warm July night that develops the size of the forthcoming day's floral display. Hemerocallis are most attractive as companions to well-kept Iris foliage, platycodons or ballon flowers, and perennial phlox in the midsummer garden. The blues in the platycodon and the whites in the phlox should be predominant.

Daylilies come in a variety of colors. In the chartreuse to yellow shades, ATLAS (Kraus) and JAKE RUSSELL (Russell) are highly recommended as all-around performers. Among the golds and oranges, PRESIDENT RICE (Claar) and ATEN (Kraus) are very desirable. There is a relatively new color class among the daylilies. This consists of cantaloupe blends and tangerine shades. The color for this class is more commonly known as melon. FRANCES FAY (Fay) is an extra fine specimen here. MULTNOMAH (Kraus), while still rare, has won the 1963 Stout Medal, which is the comparable award of the Dyke's Medal among Iris. MULTNOMAH is one of the sturdiest of melon daylilies on the market today. MAGIC DAWN (Hall) is a lovely ruffled rose pink, while WAR EAGLE (Hall) is a most satisfactory red. Its color is rich and velvety with form that has no peer to date. LUXURY LACE (Spalding), while new, is now reasonably priced and is a choice item in lavender. An old but good plum purple that still challenges the new introductions is JEAN LAFITTE (Claar). Its unusual color and broad form rarely fail to evoke comments from garden visitors.

(over)

IRISES FOR MINNEAPOLIS PARK GARDENS

Mr. Howard I. Moore, Superintendent of Minneapolis Parks, has assured the Twin City Iris Society that our proposed donation of iris rhizomes will be planted and cared for under the direction of Mr. Carl Holst, Supervisor of Horticulture. Mr. Holst will provide space for planting in Lyndale Park near the Rose Garden and in the "Old Armory Gardens" north of the Walker Art Gallery.

Those who want to participate in this program should contact either Mr. Glen Hanson or myself, who will receive your donations of rhizomes and deliver them to Mr. Holst to be planted during the latter part of July to assure a nice display of bloom in 1965.

In order to make the best display it will be suggested to Mr. Holst that four to seven rhizomes of a variety be planted in each clump. Those who have spare rhizomes, less than four of a variety, should combine their offerings with another member in order to assure a full clump of each variety.

I share the opinion that we want to see the best irises growing in our public park gardens that we can afford to give. I might suggest varieties listed in the Popularity Poll of 100 Favorite Varieties or new varieties purchased at the Twin City Iris Society Auction in the past few years.

We should not give varieties known to be tender such as Snow Flurry, Sierra Skies, Pet's Dream or Char-Maize. Varieties that require staking should not be given. Zantha, Palomino, Truly Yours, Pink Formal, Golden Sunshine, Cloth of Gold, Vatican Purple, Bryce Canyon and Blue Shimmer are some varieties.

If you believe a variety does not have good carrying power or garden value, perhaps it should not be offered.

It is sometimes difficult to tell if the flowers on pink varieties are opening or folding and the spent blooms are little noticed; but on the reds the spent blooms are very conspicuous and unsightly so varieties such as the reds that burn in the sun and conspicuously show their spent blooms should be in the minority of varieties offered for planting.

Solid colors of blue, pink, yellow and white have good garden value and carrying power. Deep purple can very effectively be used for accent.

G.B. Gable

IRISES

Accent
Allaglow
Amethyst Flame
Argus Pheasant
Bang
Bella Mohr
Beechleaf
Black Hills
Black Taffeta
Blue Fountain
Blue Rhythm
Blue Sapphire
Brass Accents
Bronze Bell
Brigadoon
Cibola
Celestial Blue
Dancing Tiger
Father Rigney
Gay Adventure
Irish Linen
Knight hood
Lady Albright
Lady Rodgers
Lake of the Isles
Minnesota Skies
May Magic
Mission Glory
Mission Starlite
Northern Lights
Oriental Pearl
Polar Cap
Party dress
Phoebus Apollo
Port wine
Pretty gay
Rose Glory
Rosy Veil
Storm warning
Sandy Jean
Tribute
White Bouquet
Wide World
Lady Mohr
Elmohr
Rainbow Gold
Golden Garland
New Snow
Lulu Marguerite

Frances Craig
Harbor Blue
Arctic Flame
Captain Gallant
Henry Shaw
Dawn Crest
Thotmes III
Utah Valley
South Pacific
Violet Hills
Valimar
Desert Song
Regina Maria
Top Flight
Helen Collingwood
Pacific Panorama
Foxfire
Lavanesque
Queen's Lace
Caroline Jane
Lady Ilse
Minnie
Wabash
Cascadian
Curl'd Cloud
Cloud Cap
Wayward Wind
May Hall
Waxing Moon
Tranquility
Allaglow
Carmela
Solid Gold
Chinquapin
Native Dancer
Polka Time
Spanish Peaks
Whole Cloth
Violet Harmony
Frost and Flame
Eleanor's Pride
Mary Randall
Sable Night
Melodrama
Happy Birthday
First Violet
Allegiance
June Meredith
Celestial Snow

Swan Ballet
Olympic Torch
Butterscotch Kiss
Techny Chimes
Inca Chief
Pierre Menard
Limelight
Rococo
Cliffs of Dover
Argus Pheasant
Edenite
Black Swan
Galilee
Dot and Dash
Emma Cook
Rehobeth
Indiglow
Snow Goddess
Brass Accents
Dotted Swiss
Chivalry
Pinnacle
Taholah
Glittering Amber
Pretty Carol
Lynn Hall
Dreamy
Caribou Trail
Cathedral Bells
Millionaire
Ola Kala
Aquatennial Queen

DWARF IRIS

If you want solid masses of flowers that bloom with the narcissus and tulips, then try growing dwarf iris. We get more pleasure from our dwarf iris than any other flower and have them growing in beds where they can be seen from our kitchen window. The bright colors of yellow, blue, white and violet are truly a sight to behold.

There are early, midseason and late blooming varieties of dwarf iris the same as with the tall bearded iris. You can have carpet-like beds of solid display bloom a full month before the tall bearded iris commence to bloom.

During 1963, a chart listing fifty-five varieties was accurately kept showing date of first flower, number of days each variety remained in mass display bloom and date of last flower. The first flowers usually appeared several days ahead of the mass of display bloom. The true value of each variety was determined by the number of days it remained in full display bloom.

Zwanamire, a beautiful ruffled miniature yellow started the season April 23rd with the first flower. It was a mass of flowers in full display bloom from April 27th until May 4th and quit blooming May 7th. Six more early varieties started to bloom during April and all were through blooming before the last late variety started. Snow Fairy was in solid display bloom from April 28th until May 8th while the late variety, Orange Bantam was in full display bloom for nineteen days, from May 9th until May 27th inclusive. The average was about seven days but eleven varieties were in full display bloom for ten days or longer.

Eight varieties of tall bearded iris started to bloom during May 24th, 25th, and 26th so the dwarf bearded iris started blooming over a month ahead of the tall bearded varieties and continued until after the start of the tall bearded iris season.

Dwarf iris multiply rapidly and soon grow into a solid mass.

G. B. Cable

INTERMEDIATE IRIS

Have you noticed? The iris discussed here in the News and Views have been getting taller and later. First came the miniature dwarfs and then the standard dwarfs. Now we are up to a group that should be between 14 and 28 inches tall, and bloom midway between the dwarf and tall seasons.

There are lots of intermediate iris around. Very vigorous and hardy, the old timers stayed in gardens for generations. A great many of these are early introductions of the Sass Brothers and the top award for the group now is called the Sass Award in their honor. This is presented to one iris a year and is the equivalent of an Award of Merit. Theoretically it makes the winner eligible for the Dyke's Medal, but it will probably be a few years before judges learn to consider seriously anything but a tall for the honor.

Trying to improve the intermediates was a futile sort of exercise for many years because most of the older varieties are sterile. But each year now sees the introduction of new and exciting entries in the class. When Mr. Cook and Mr. Douglas began pollen swapping and crossing between the pumilas dwarfs and tails,

they really expected something larger and later than the charming standard dwarfs they produced. Those pumilas were potent parents. But there proved to be a real bonus in the fertility of these little fellows. When bred back to tall, they produced intermediates that were far prettier than the oldies, and were fertile both to other intermediates and to dwarfs and tall.

Now there are intermediate varieties in a wide range of lovely clear colors, unusual color patterns, excellent form and quite respectable stalks and branching. Some fine new introductions are: Blue Asterish, such a pale blue that it looks a little dirty, but a nice flower with a darker blue area on the falls; and its sister Cloud Fluff, a charming round white flower; Little Angel is another white that is highly praised, but I haven't seen it yet. Lime Ripples is a ruffled light yellow as well-formed as the best tall. Paul Cook's Kiss-Me-Kate is an individual; creamy colored with a narrow violet border on the falls. It is a tiny cousin to the tall Emma Cook and there is a family resemblance. First Lilac is just what the name implies a beautiful smooth lilac self. The Schriener's have introduced two that look promising indeed. Cutie and Drummer Boy are siblings, one white and one light blue, each with blue veins on the falls. There are flamingo pinks being introduced now, but I know of none that are up to snuff for clarity and smoothness yet. An interesting side line is the introduction of oxco and regelias into intermediate breeding and many of the offspring are fascinating. I grow Moonchild which is an oncobred. It is a light pink orchid, veined violet, with a deep violet signal patch. It is just as round and lush and exotic looking as its giant-sized relatives, but Moonchild is dainty and endearing.

Now aren't you glad? You no longer need to apologize for the quality of the flowers when you indulge your desire for early iris bloom.

"For centuries the Boys' Festival has been celebrated yearly on the 5th day of the 5th month, May 5, _____. The Festival is also known as 'Shobu-no-Sekku' or 'Iris Festival' and calls for many leaves of 'Shobu,' variety of Iris, whose long, narrow cut leaf is somewhat like a sword blade in shape. The boys bathe in the Shobu-yu, or Iris hot-bath, on this day to instil a warrior spirit in them. The wooden sword used on this day is called 'Shobu-katana' (Iris Sword) from 'We Japanese.'"

(All rights reserved)

Fujiya Hotel, Ltd.
Miyamoshita, Hakone
Japan

Printed by Yamagata Press,
Yokohama, Japan

Mrs. Bakke received a long distance call from a friend in Fresno, California on April 19, 1964 that Viking Prince, one of our seedlings she had sent to him last fall was in bloom April 15, 1964 and that he thought it was exceptional. It is nice to know that our upper midwest seedlings also are doing well in California.

The End