

Twin City Iris Society

NEWS & VIEWS

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%
% "ORIGINAL ART COMBINED WITH FLOWER ARRANGING" %
% Slides Shown by Mrs. K. W. Fisher %
%
% Thursday, April 20, 1967 8:00 P.M. %
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% Guaranty State Bank %
% 3700 West Broadway %
% %

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Don't look now, but just around the corner is all that spring garden work waiting for you and me! Our heavy clay soil is still too wet to work in, but one of these days I'll be outside all day. Maybe we can compare sore muscles next time we meet.

We hope to see all of you at our April meeting when Mrs. Fisher will present an interesting program on "Original Art and Flower Arranging." This promises to be a most pleasant evening--short meeting, interesting program, plenty of coffee and lost of time to talk. See you April 20, 8:00 P.M.

Dorothy Rudser

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REPEATS

Thanks to friend and member Glenn Hanson, your editor now has on file the first year's issues of News and Views, which was first printed in 1953 when Gus Sindt was president (elected in October 1952). Browsing through these issues revealed some interesting items. 1953 editor, Mrs. Edythe Burns, counted the days until Iris time in the same way that children (and some of the rest of us) count the days until Christmas. The February issue claimed 108 more days until Iris time; March had narrowed it to 60 days; and April 30 days.

Instead of a Who's Who in TCIS as we have been printing lately, Mrs. Burns gave glimpses of members in a column called "Varietal Commentary."

A poem in the February 1953 issue is worth repeating:

O silvery stream, with glint and gleam
Where dipping boughs are laving,
The current lags where Sweet Blue Flags
By ripples stirred are waving.
Amid the green, their soft blue sheen,
With white and purple penciled,
Like bits of sky, where sunbeams lie,
Through leafy branches stenciled.

--W. B. Hunt

PRIZE WINNING IRIS

The March meeting brought out all of the March blooming iris--and which ones bloom in March varies each year according to the interest and imagination of our members who attend our "Come Dressed as an Iris" party. The winning "blooms" are listed below:

Most Unusual:	Warren Johnson as <u>Edenite</u> Stan Rudser as <u>Fox Charm</u>
Most Elaborate:	Grace Carlock as <u>King's Choice</u> Walter Carlock as <u>Queen's Choice</u>
Most Typical:	Mary Duvall as <u>Flamenco Dancer</u> Urban Ipsen as <u>Anytime</u>
Most Humorous:	Maybelle Wright as <u>Bridal Bouquet</u> Millie Stover as <u>Fairy Tale</u>
Honorable Mention:	Frances Ehle as <u>Gypsy Jewels</u>

Prizes for being able to identify the most iris costumes went to Millie Stover and Julius Wadekamper.

Many pictures were taken of these March iris, which we hope to see in the future, but the most photographed must have been that most charming horse, Bridal Bouquet and Fairy Tale.

Our thanks go to the ladies who served the pot-luck supper and all those who brought the abundant quantities and top quality food. Special appreciation goes to Greta Kessenich, who furnished the lovely centerpieces which were given as prizes to the winners of the evening. We're sorry she wasn't feeling well enough to be present at the party.

Welcome to new member C. James Olson, who lives at 12808 March Circle, Minnetonka, Minnesota 55343. Mr. Olson, who was recruited by Mrs. Sweeney, is employed by Dahlberg Electronics. We are told he is so busy with his job, he may not attend many meetings, but we hope he'll be able to come enough to be welcomed in person.

LILIES OF THE FIELD

By Walter Carlock

Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden, let its fragrance be wafted abroad.
--Solomon 4:16

As spring arrives and the south wind wakes our lawns and gardens with fresh greenery, to be followed with bright colors, I always appreciate the first blooms, even the first bloom of our common dandelion. I quickly remember that a common weed flower here is carefully raised elsewhere. So too, we raise carefully flowers that are so common that they cover fields in Palestine. The iris is one of the several flower candidates to qualify as Christ's "lilies of the field." Other candidates include various lily-like flowers, such as the lily, gladiolus, and may include the poppy-anemone, which paints the plains of Palestine with bright scarlet each spring.

The above thought put into motion a plan to delve into a variety of materials at the library about Bible plants. Having done a little deeper than a casual reading of material, I felt I ought to share a few words on plants of the Bible.

I will dispose of some information, by saying the "Worshipful plants" while interesting, are not necessarily Bible plants. These include those plants that carry the name of a Biblical person or place, such as marigold (Mary's gold), Star of Bethlehem, Resurrection plant, Madonna lily, Christ thorns, Crown of Thorns, St. John's wort, Job's Tears, Joseph's Coat, Jerusalem cherry, or Jerusalem artichoke. Incidentally, the Jerusalem artichoke acquired the first part of its name through a mispronunciation of "girasole," the Italian name for sunflower given to the plant when early explorers brought it from North America to Italy.

Another whole group of plants that can be dismissed from our consideration is the legendary Bible plants. These are the ones that have fanciful stories, such as the cross Christ was crucified on was made of poplar, and because the tree did not like to have to do this dreadful thing, it began to quake and so all the poplars of its kind quake even today. The quaking aspen always rustles in ever so light a breeze.

Most articles and books on plants of the Bible really mean plants of Palestine. If one were to really write of all the plants in the Bible, he would have to have an all inclusive book on botany, for the first mention of plants is all inclusive. Genesis 1:11 "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit . . ." Genesis 1:29 "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Jeremiah 29:5 "Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce." Proverbs 15:17 "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fattened ox and hatred with it." (This is not to be construed that we must all be vegetarians because people do not have to be angry and are not always angry because they eat meat. But if you are angry at meal time, you double the load on your stomach. Anger holds back the digesting juices, meat takes three to six hours to digest, and if the gastric juices are held back, then you are in for six to nine hours of internal churning, so you pay a price for the luxury of being angry.)

There are gardens planted with trees and flowers associated with Biblical characters and events. One in California, Carmel-by-the-Sea, has a Tamarisk tree whose honeylike drops resemble the manna that fed the Israelites (I doubt that this is the source of manna). This tree belongs in such a garden because Abraham planted a Tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and Saul lived in the shade of such a tree. These Bible gardens also have pomegranates, myrtles, a gourd like the one that sheltered Jonah from the heat (I've usually seen gourds growing on the ground and climbing a single wire fence; but one of the organic gardening magazines recently showed a gourd plant covering quite an extensive arbor that one could walk under to pick the gourds that hung down. It's amazing that the plant could support so much weight. Such a gourd plant could easily provide cool shade.) These gardens have many herbs such as anise, mint, myrrh, rue, coriander from which come white seeds for seasoning foods. There are also tulips, irises, lilies, narcissuses, autumn crocuses, and bulrushes similar to those that sheltered the baby Moses.

Besides Bible gardens, I read of an exhibit that presumably had Palestinian plants. Would you be surprised to see the common dandelion at a flower show? This is one of the bitter herbs. Others are endive, chickory, lettuce, and sorrel, and perhaps even the horseradish, which is not specifically mentioned but is native to the Near East. Exodus 12:8 mentions these bitter herbs to be eaten with the paschal lamb. Today we serve lamb in a similar manner using mint for the sharp flavor. The exhibit had Rose of Jericho which is the same as grandmother's oleander. There were fig trees, olives, cedar of Lebanon, grape vines,

lotus, water lilies, papyrus and willows . . . all from Palestine and Egypt. Perhaps it would be interesting for one of the local flower shows to put together such an exhibit.

I Kings 10:10,25 points out that herbs are more valuable than jewels. They were a medium of exchange, a source of pleasure and used for medicine. The Queen of Sheba brought King David rich gifts of spices. In Matthew 2:11 "They offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." The anise of today is the same as used in Bible times as payment of tithes--Matthew 23:23. Besides these uses, herbs show their value in cooking. Mint and anise and cumin, balm and calamus and leek, saffron and cinnamon and aloes--there is poetry in the sound of these words . . . a deeper poetry in the realization of the long history of these herbs . . . and in a still deeper sense, one must appreciate the goodness of a God who provides not only a bare existence of wheat for bread, and springs of water, but also the mints and anise to flavor and enhance and make eating a pleasure. As I sing the value of herbs, it seems appropriate to note that saffron (used with rice dishes) is the same saffron that was sung about in the Song of Solomon 4:14.

No doubt the Biblical housewife had many herbs which were not specifically mentioned in the Bible. Horseradish is one. Perhaps Cyclamen would be another, for the Arabs used the poison from cyclamen to stun fish--not a very esthetic purpose for such a pretty plant.

Some herbs had and still have several different uses. Rue was cultivated for medicinal properties but was also used to pay tithes--Luke 11:42. Jeremiah 51:8--anise, cumin, mint and balm used for cures. You've heard of the Balm of Gilead. Mark 4:31--mustard used for poultices. Psalm 51:7--hyssop for purification. Exodus 30:34--onycha was gathered for medicine but also used as a perfume. In our supposedly modern era, many of the medical profession have forgotten the herbs and class them in with witchdoctors (I knew if I worked this long enough, I could name an iris). Some few medical men are seriously studying herbs with the idea of finding the chemicals that made certain herbs cure certain ailments.

Perfumes were used not only for personal pleasure of the various fragrances but also for religious services. Exodus 30:34-35--"Take sweet spices, stacte, onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense (of each an equal part) and make an incense blended as by the perfumer." Ecclesiasticus 50:8--lily roots were placed in chests to add fragrance. I remember that iris roots give orris powder which is used for the same purpose nowadays. Exodus 30:22-25--cassia used for anointing oils. From birth to death, herbs have a part. John 19:39-40--myrrh is used for preparing the dead. Perhaps there was some mystical significance in the gifts to the baby Jesus of listing myrrh last, perhaps prophetic of His death. Myrrh (Sweet cicely of Europe) is a sweet scented leafy, graceful foliage plant, whose seed may be sown in autumn as soon as ripe, and the plants will come up in spring. The plant persists for years.

It is reassuring to hear Christ's words, Luke 12:27-28--"Consider the lilies how they grow. . . . If God so clothe(s) the grass . . . how much more will He clothe you?"

Lord God, Look upon our sowing,
Bless the little gardens
And the good green growing!