



Cedar Valley Iris & Daylily Society



March, 1994

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear gardening enthusiasts:

It's been nearly six months since we saw each other at the Fall banquet at the Highlander. The very favorable comments I received from many of you suggests that we ought to make it an annual event! Many thanks to Fred McDowell, Jerry Hadrava, and Lynn Stoll for the very pleasurable slide show. It put the finishing touches on an evening of fine food and enjoyable conversation.

After thinking back over a very frigid fall and winter and the snowiest February since they have been keeping records, I am glad we didn't try to schedule a meeting during those months. However, by now, most of us are climbing the walls wanting to get out and putter in the garden. Those catalogues that have come in these past few weeks have probably been tempting you to part with your hard-earned money in exchange for those enchanting creations you passed up last year. Whether your weakness is iris or daylilies, or even hosta, it's time to think Spring!

To further get you in the mood, CVIDS will have its first meeting of 1994 on Saturday March 26 at Marilyn Little's home in West Liberty. We will discuss future meetings and events for the 1994, and make plans for our 1994 club plant purchases and auction. We will select dates for garden tours and the annual plant sale in Monticello, so please come with calendars to make planning easier. We also will have a slide show. Curt Hanson, the prominent daylily hybridizer from Ohio, will send slides of his recent introductions. This should be of interest to many of you, because Hanson's flowers do well here! Gerald Hobbs will show slides of some of his hybridizing work and also other daylily cultivars. In response to a request to see the slides of the first Siberian Iris Convention again and for the benefit of those who missed seeing them last fall, if time permits, Lynn Stoll will show a selection of some of the most exciting new Siberians seen at that convention.

I look forward to seeing you on March 26 at 1:30.

Barry Stoll, President

REMINDER: DUES ARE DUE!

If you can't attend the March 26 meeting, please send your 1994 dues (\$5.00 individual, \$7.00 family) to the current treasurer (Lynn Stoll, 999 310th St., Atalissa, IA 52720) to ensure that you continue to receive the newsletter and other notices of club activities. Make checks payable to Cedar Valley Iris and Daylily Society.

Directions to Marilyn Little's Home: Interstate 80 to Exit 259 (West Liberty). Follow County Road X40 ("Garfield Ave.") south 4.9 miles to T intersection with Hwy. 6 at outskirts of West Liberty. Turn left on Hwy. 6; go 0.6 miles to E. 4th St. Turn left on E. 4th St. and go two blocks. Marilyn's house is on the northeast corner of E. 4th and Clark St. **From the South**, take Hwy. 218 north to Iowa City, then go east on I-80 to Exit 259 and follow directions above; or take Hwy. 61 to Muscatine, then Hwy. 38 north 9 miles to Hwy. 6. Turn left (west) on Hwy. 6 and follow it 12 miles into West Liberty. Turn right (north) on E. 4th St.

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST TO CVIDS MEMBERS

March 26: CVIDS spring meeting. Marilyn Little's house (501 E. 4th St., West Liberty; phone: 627-2910), 1:30 PM. Business meeting, plans for 1994 club activities. Slide show of slides from Curt Hanson and Gerald Hobbs.

May 12-14: American Hemerocallis Society National Convention, Orlando, FL. Tour gardens will include some of the largest daylily gardens in the U.S. (Stamiles' Floyd Cove, Big Tree, Kirchhoff/Morss's Daylily World, and Salters' Rollingwood Gardens). Convention-goers will see literally *acres* of named daylilies and future introductions. Other nearby gardens include those of Bill Munson, Dave Talbott, Ed Brown, and Ra Hansen. Registration fee \$144.00 before April 1, \$180 after. For details, consult "The Daylily Journal" (Winter, 1993, available from any AHS member).

May 22-25: American Iris Society National Convention, Portland, OR. Tour will feature some of the largest iris gardens in the country, including Schreiners and Cooleys, as well as two fine gardens of Siberians and species. Several other hybridizers' gardens (Keith Keppel, Roger Nelson) are located in the immediate area and will be open to convention visitors. For further information, contact Lynn or Barry Stoll (946-3471).

May 27-29: American Iris Society Region 21 Spring Tour, Norfolk, NE. Featured gardens will include that of Cal Reuter, with thousands of iris on display. Everyone is welcome; you don't have to be an AIS member to attend. Registration fee is \$33 if received by April 15, \$37 thereafter. Contact Emma Pederson, 922 S. 5th St., Norfolk, NE 68701.

June 24-26: AHS Region 11 Meeting, St. Louis, MO. Gardens on tour include Oscie Whatley. Banquet speaker, Sarah Sikes. Registration fee \$50.00. For further information, see The Daylily Journal, Spring 1994, or contact Marilyn Little. Our club might consider carpooling or renting a van to attend.

July 8-10: American Hemerocallis Society Region 1 Meeting, Omaha, NE. Gardens on tour include York, Stanek, Reed, Alexander, and Mazur. Banquet speaker, hybridizer Dennis Anderson ("Indy" series). Registration fee \$47.00. You don't have to be an AHS member to attend. For further information, contact regional meeting chairman Jan Fricke, Rt. 1, Box 170, Elkhorn, NE 68022.

UPCOMING CVIDS EVENTS

These will be planned and scheduled at the March 26 meeting. We hope to tour as many gardens as possible during the bloom seasons for iris (both medians and tall bearded) and daylilies. We will also hope to plan some slide shows, an auction of club iris and daylilies, and a plant sale (our only fund-raising event), and some picnics or potlucks.

What would you like the club to do this year? Come to our meeting, or pass along your suggestions to any of the current officers.

1992 OFFICERS

President: Barry Stoll
999 310th St.
Atalissa, IA 52720
946-3471

Vice-President: Joy Adams
R. R. 3
Monticello, IA 52310
465-3898

Secretary: Marilyn Little, 501 E. 4th St., West Liberty, IA 62776 627-2910

Treasurer/Newsletter Editor: Lynn Stoll

THE SIBERIAN IRISES OF ROBERT HOLLINGWORTH

by Lynn Stoll

(from the Spring, 1994 issue of the AIS Region 21 Newsletter)

In the decade since Dr. Robert Hollingworth introduced his first Siberian iris, **FORREST McCORD**, he has introduced only a total of 16 different cultivars. But a quick look at recent AIS awards listings will tell you that this is a very special group of irises. Out of this group have come the 1992 and 1993 winners of the coveted Morgan-Wood Medal (**LADY VANESSA** and **JEWELLED CROWN**, respectively), as well as the runner-up for the 1991 medal (**WINDWOOD SPRING**). Further, each introduction that has been in commerce long enough to be eligible has won at least an Honorable Mention from AIS judges, and eight have won an Award of Merit or higher.

These honors, of course, are the result of distinctiveness and outstanding garden performance all over the country. We grow all but one of the Hollingworth introductions. Although these represent only a small percentage of our Siberian collection, when we are asked to list our favorites, most of the names that spring to mind are Hollingworth introductions. The two Morgan-Wood winners and the 1991 runner-up are all simply superb. **JEWELLED CROWN**, the 1993 winner, is a stunning large, flared deep wine-red tetraploid with a circular gold blaze. In our garden, it tends to bloom a little too far down in the foliage for my taste, but it's a vigorous grower, and the flower is just out of this world. **LADY VANESSA**, the 1992 medal winner, is a lovely ruffled wine-red bitone. It, too, is a vigorous grower and gives a beautiful effect in a clump. A diploid, **LADY VANESSA** is one of my personal top favorites. **WINDWOOD SPRING** (runner-up to medal-winner **MABEL CODAY** in 1991) is a charming short light blue, very ruffled and flared, with large feathery stylearms and a prominent white blaze. All of these beauties are stunning in a clump, and unlikely to be mistaken for any other Siberian iris.

Several other Hollingworth Siberians are less well known, but also rank among my own personal favorites. **HELIOTROPE BOUQUET** (1986; AM 1990) is probably the most distinctive clump in the garden, in terms of color. Visitors often head clear across the garden, straight toward the tall mound of glowing heliotrope/mid-mauve with blue influence to get a better look at its well-formed, flaring flowers. **PAS DE DEUX** (1988; HM 1990) is a charming light yellow amoena, again with a lovely clump effect; it's a more vigorous grower than the better known **BUTTER AND SUGAR**, and its broad, round form is a great improvement in this color class. **INDY** (1985; AM 1991) is a flaring medium red-violet self with a blue cast, with no noticeable blaze. **CORONATION ANTHEM** (1990) is Hollingworth's first **JEWELLED CROWN** seedling to be introduced. Bob says that **JEWELLED CROWN** is consistently passing heavy ruffling, full rounded form, strong patterns, and vigor to its seedlings. **CORONATION ANTHEM** is a large, very ruffled mid to deep blue with a creamy yellow blaze that fades to white. It's an extremely vigorous grower, and has displayed a tendency to rebloom in our garden. In general, all of these Hollingworth Siberians are distinctive, beautifully formed, vigorous garden performers, and mature into beautiful clumps.

One additional favorite of mine is Bob's only 1993 introduction, **OVER IN GLORYLAND**. We had the privilege of growing it as a guest iris for several years before it was introduced, so I feel I can comment on it. Those of you who attended the 1991 Region 21 tour in Iowa City may remember a large clump of a round, ruffled, velvety dark blue-purple with a striking light gold blaze. At last year's first national Siberian convention, **OVER IN GLORYLAND** was voted the Favorite Guest Iris and Favorite Iris Seen on Tour, both by a wide margin. Perhaps even more impressive, it garnered the most votes for HC of *any* iris (including TBs) in both 1991 and 1992. Introduced (and sold out early) at \$50.00, it probably won't be widely available for several years, but it is one to watch. (Morgan-Wood Medal 1999???)

The consistently outstanding quality and distinction of the Hollingworth Siberian introductions cannot be a coincidence. Clearly the man behind these jewels has a keenly discerning eye for quality, and rigorous standards. (I keep thinking about the observation by the convention visitor in Hollingworths' garden, quoted in my last article, about how the rejects Bob would be composting would be better than most anything on the market today!) In a recent interview, I asked Bob to tell us a little about his hybridizing program and its goals.

When did you first start hybridizing Siberians, and how did you get started? And why Siberians and not, say, TBs or something else? "Actually I did start with TBs in 1971 and got some funny looking stuff -- along with a few nice ones. I have one TB seedling that we still grow because we like the unusual smoky peach/apricot color. But there seemed to be an awful lot of people working with TBs, and the Siberian field seemed much less congested. We had a couple of nice Sibes in the garden, and I remember being blown away by a grand clump of EGO growing in Forrest McCord's garden, which got me motivated to take the path less trodden. I made the first Siberian cross in 1973, and the first colchicine treatments in 1974. Why do this? You know, I can't really remember; it was one of those things that sneaks up on you. I think the instructions on hybridizing that comes with AIS membership may have gotten me started with TBs, just to see what happened. And then when you realize you can actually create new plants, the feeling is a little god-like and you're hooked!"

What first catches your eye in the seedling patch? "Not to be facetious, but what catches my eye is what catches my eye. It really can be anything, but large signal patches on the falls are always eye-catching. So are bitones, strong colors, etc. Yellow always stands out because it is still an uncommon color in 28 chromosome Sibes."

How do you evaluate cultivars before finally choosing ones for introduction? "I would like to tell you that this is a highly organized and rational process. Not so, but it has improved over the years. Now I select perhaps 5-10 three- or four-year-old seedlings each year to line out for further evaluation. At the same time they get sent off to AIS and other conventions for evaluation. This gives us an idea how well they transplant (it's surprising how many things grow well in their seedling location, but never show comparable vigor again -- I don't know why), and if they will grow in a variety of climates. Some just never look as good as you thought they did as seedlings, others stubbornly refuse to outgrow faults like lack of bud count/branching. Visitor reaction is important, too. It's hard to turn your back on something everyone likes. Of the 5-10 that start out, 2-3 may make it to introduction several years later. And then, once in a while, an iris just won't go away and sort of nags you into introducing it -- SWEET SURRENDER is one that never got chosen for the "select" group but just developed such a nice clump effect while it was being neglected that it couldn't be ignored."

What will you be introducing in 1994? "That's not yet decided. There are three possibilities: STRAWBERRY FAIR (a JEWELLED CROWN seedling with remarkable fullness and ruffling); SIMPLE GIFTS (just the opposite, an entirely tailored and cool very light blue-violet diploid with a form that is quite novel); or THAT'S MY BABY (a petite and very ruffled diploid dark red self. Probably not all three; we shall need to evaluate the amount of stock."

What is coming in the future, both from your hybridizing program and in Siberian iris in general? "That's too big a question to answer -- and anyway, I'm not going to give too many ideas away -- I don't have enough. Lots of things -- much better yellow amoenas, moving quite close to all-yellow irises, plicata-like patterns in blue and red, many different forms including good dwarf varieties (though not from us yet). Really, we have only begun to explore the range of possibilities in the 28 chromosome Sibes."

Why do so many people say they don't like flat Siberian flowers? "I like them. You lose something in the side view, to be sure, but regain it when you approach the clump and look down on it. You can get lovely contrasts of standards, falls and stylearms in flat flowers that aren't noticeable in vertical forms. We like chrysanthemums and clematis as flat flowers, and a lot of Japanese iris flowers are essentially flat. Why not Siberians?"

In general, what are the differences between diploids and tetraploids in terms of garden effect and performance? "Generalizations are dangerous -- but usually tetraploids have more individual 'whoomph' as flowers -- larger size, bolder patterns, stronger ruffling, etc. Vigor is not affected. Foliage is just as attractive. Flower stems are generally shorter in tets, and it can be a fight to get seedlings that have the flowers above the foliage, although this is not a universal problem. The price to be paid may be in gracefulness and mass flower effect. You lose the 'fluttering in the breeze' effect of older diploids, and I have never seen a tet that would throw up as many bloom stalks as something like CAESAR'S BROTHER. Because of their different values, I expect both diploid and tetraploid lines to interest hybridizers for a long time to come."

What role does Judy play in all of this? "Ah, let me count the ways! I used to joke that I was the brain and she was the brawn behind the operation, but this got to be too dangerous to continue. Judy does a lot of the basic care of the irises; she doesn't plan or make crosses. I raise the seedlings and do any colchicine treatments. She gives guidance on what's good when they flower and handles all the selling and shipping. She often acts as the social director for visitors. (The only trouble with visitors is that they tend to come during the iris season when I'm trying to make crosses and evaluate seedlings after sneaking out of work early!)"

We all thank both Bob and Judy for the wonderful Siberians they have created which grace many of our gardens, and we wish them all the best in years to come!

WANTED!!

Articles for newsletter -- short or long, on any subject of interest to our members. Some suggestions: How about your favorite companion plants especially the July-blooming "true blues" and pure whites that complement daylilies (such as *Veronica* "Sunny Border Blue," *Anchusa*, *Echinops*, white phlox, white Asiatic lilies), and the pure reds that bloom with the iris (peonies, oriental poppies, *Lychnis*)? Or how about your favorite season-extenders, the very early- and very late-blooming daylilies? What 10 varieties of daylilies or iris would you recommend to a new member, and why? What tips can you share about iris or daylily culture or pest control? Please don't be shy -- share your ideas and knowledge with others in the group. We can help with editing if you want us to. If each of us contributes just a paragraph or two, this information could be combined into a very helpful article about what is successful *here*, not in some other part of the country. We could even publish our combined article in the regional AIS or AHS newsletter as a contribution by CVIDS.)

JOIN US!!

All CVIDS members are encouraged to join one or more of the national plant societies. A small membership fee brings you quarterly journals filled with useful information on new varieties rated highly by judges, cultural practices, landscaping ideas, and a wide variety of related topics of interest to plant lovers. There's also information on local, regional, and national meetings and workshops -- a chance to meet some new friends with shared interests. Both the iris and daylily societies also have regional newsletters with news and information of particular interest to local gardeners. The American Iris Society also has a number of special interest subsections (Reblooming Iris Society, Society for Siberian Irises, Median Iris Society, etc.); contact Lynn or Barry Stoll for further information on these.

American Iris Society

\$12.50 individual, \$15.50 family

Send check to:

Marilyn Harlow, Membership Sec'y.
P. O. Box 8455
San Jose, CA 95155-8455

American Hemerocallis Society

\$18.00 individual, \$22 family

Send check to:

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