



Top — Overlooking I-83 which bisects Maywood the summer home of Maynard and Retta Harp. On the knoll in upper right background, between the north and south bound lanes is the group of trees known as "The Harp of Winds."

Below — One small part of the largest 1976 Region 4 convention tour garden. Over 500 varieties of irises, plus rock garden plants and wildflowers are featured in graceful beds on the rolling hillside. Erosion is minimized by stones Maynard Harp hauled from Maywood's fields. Retta designed the beds and served as stone mason.



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EDITOR'S PAGE

The lateness of the January issue (which you received in March!) was due to a combination of time pressures on the part of the Editor, the publisher, and the mailing crew. We are all guilty and hope that this will not occur again!!

I saw my first iris of the season on the first day of spring, March 20! Though they were old, un-named varieties, it was good to see the clear white and deep purple of the door-yard "flags" in stately bloom. As I write this on March 24, there are already buds in some SDB'S, IB's and TB's in our garden ! !

On behalf of the Region may I extend a warm welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Andre Viette who transferred in from Region 2. Mr. Viette is a Garden Judge. Their current address is Rte. 1, Box 16A, Fishersville, Va. 22439.

Participate in the iris shows this year! There are four scheduled within our region this bloom season. Details are given in this issue. There is great satisfaction in seeing one of your own homegrown bloomstalks on the show table and triply so if it is wearing a ribbon! It has been said: "Try it, you'll like it."

HAVE YOU REGISTERED FOR THE 1976 CONVENTION IN MARYLAND? SEE THE LAST ISSUE OF NEWS-CAST AND REGISTER RIGHT AWAY. I'll see you in Towson!

Roy

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF NEWS-CAST IS
JULY 1, 1976 ! ! !

RVP Message

Spring is here and Iris time is just around the corner. As a matter of fact a few brave medians have already bloomed. The Regional meeting in Towson will be well worth your while to attend. Not only is the FSK a very enthusiastic chapter in our Region, but they will have an illustrious teacher for their Judges Training as well as the banquet speaker in Ben Hager. I always encourage everybody to attend the National meeting as well. You will see, or at least hope to see, provided the weather-gods will smile on Lansing, Michigan, many of the new introductions. I have always enjoyed meeting the Iris people from around the country, the growers, the hybridizers and the people that run our organization. I hope our Region will be represented by as many members as possible.

Our Region is busy. I know several chapters are having accredited shows. During TB season is the ideal time to recruit new members. This is the life blood. The old guard is getting older and loses interest and stamina. So here is hoping that all of you have a lovely Iris season and bring new friends into our midst. To all of you I wish a superlative Iris season, strong backs and good health so that you may enjoy your garden and the gardens of your Iris friends.

Anne Lee, RVP

AIS JUDGES — 1976

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

(no entries)

*Present or Former Regional Vice President

TOUR GARDENS OF THE MARYLAND REGIONAL CONVENTION

Pat Johnson

Come with me on a "tour" of gardens, as Maryland once again hosts the Regional Convention. Our first stop will be at the home of Alice Miller, where the iris must share the spotlight with Alice's beautiful inner courtyard. Alice is a very active and generous member of the Francis Scott Key chapter, having traveled to iris conventions all over the country, and also to the Australian Iris Convention last year. She is a former chairman of the Francis Scott Key chapter, and often opens her home to chapter members for meetings and other occasions. Convention guests will be able to see her lovely garden a second time at the convention (in case you miss anything on the tour) when Alice is hostess for the iris auction on Friday night. Her elegant city garden will include guest iris from many hybridizers who generously sent rhizomes, such as Joe Ghio, Dave Niswonger, Dr. McEwen and others.

Our next garden is just a short distance away, at the home of Rosalie Figge, where her interest in a wide range of flowers and plants is evident. Her special interest in the iris category is arils and rebloomers. This is the first year this garden will be on tour, and it is a delight to visit. Rosalie has some extra willing hands for her garden, as her daughter, Rosalie A. Beasley, is editor of the youth material for the AIS Bulletin, and her two granddaughters are very active youth members. Both have tried their hand at hybridizing, with promising results. Rosalie is now serving as Secretary of the Francis Scott Key chapter.

Our last stop before lunch is the beautiful Stevenson home of Bill and Claire Barr, where several hundred iris will be on display along with roses, boxwood, and the fairly recent addition of a greenhouse. Visitors will be interested in the many fine plants here, including ferns, a rubber tree, succulents, and Bill's special favorites, the jade plants, of which he is so justly proud. Three orchid plants are a recent acquisition, and the Barrs say these won't be the last. Although this is the first time their garden is on the tour, Bill and Claire are charter members of the Francis Scott Key chapter, having joined when the chapter first formed in 1967. Bill is a past chapter chairman, and Claire holds that position now. Conventioneers will be treated to a reception and slide show Thursday evening at the Barr's, with refreshments provided by chapter members.

By now I am sure all of the tour members could use a little rest and refreshment, so we will stop for lunch at Leisters' Church in Westminster, which will be served family style. All rested and ready to go, we will board the bus once again and head for the home of Owings and Doris Rebert.

The Reberts have a lovely terraced garden, which sets the many iris off to their best advantage. Owings is treasurer of Francis Scott Key chapter, and also, along with his wife Doris, is Guest Iris Chairman for the convention. Approximately 400 rhizomes, of 250 varieties have been sent, so you can see they have been busy with many arrangements to make.

Among the hybridizers sending rhizomes were Gene and Gerry Burger who sent three varieties including SAILMASTER and GOOD INVESTMENT, which may be seen in Alice Miller's garden.

Former A. I. S. president, Bill Bledsoe, has sent seven varieties established in the Harp garden, including his 1975 unique orange introduction FLAMEBURST, and 1976 introductions BLACKBERRY WINE, STRAWBERRY WINE, and SUGAR TREE.

Popular introductions and numbered seedlings by George Crossman will be seen in all four gardens, along with the thirteen recent introductions and numbered seedlings by midwestern aril hybridizer, Henry Danielson.

Joe Ghio has mailed us five recent tall bearded introductions, including COPYCAT, LINE UP, PISTACHIO, MAGIC POSITION and MYSTIQUE.

Four tall bearded irises from Hamner are GYPSY BELLE, RIVER RHYTHM, SUN CITY, and WINTER FANTASY; Dr. Currier McEwen has sent fifteen siberian varieties, Hooker Nichols contributed both median and tall bearded, including the praisewinning AMAZON PRINCESS, and numbered seedlings. Dave Niswonger sent eight tall bearded varieties including numbered seedlings, the beautiful BUTTERSCOTCH TRIM, GLOWING VOLCANO, RIVER CITY, SWIFT RIVER, and MOON MIRAGE. Cleo Palmer has mailed median and tall bearded. Among the latter are included DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT (an appropriate choice for the home of the Star Spangled Banner), GOLD TRACERY, and LAVENDER MAJESTY.

Three rhizomes each of ten different varieties were mailed to us by Gordon Plough, which will be widely seen in the tour gardens. Steve Varner sent his latest and greatest tall bearded's, with many numbered seedlings. Our own Region 4 hybridizer, Lloyd Zurbrigg, mailed thirteen varieties, including many of his newest introductions.

In addition to the beardless varieties he will be bringing for Judges Training, Ben Hager's Melrose Gardens sent ICE SCULPTURE, Sanford Babson's novel IMPERSONATOR, VANITY, GEOMETRICS, and Hager's seedling T2626P. These will all be in the Harp's garden, in Parkton, Maryland, which is the final stop on our tour.

"Maywood" is a sixty-nine acre gardener's dream, which, at one time, was a tree farm. This is Maynard Harp's specialty, aside from iris, while Retta Harp has a wildflower garden with many rare and unusual plants, a rockery and many varieties of day lilies. The hillside iris garden has over 500 varieties, and includes median, japanese, siberian and louisiana species along with the tall bearded. Many Francis Scott Key youth members became involved with iris through picnics and trips to Maywood, as the Harps give generously of their time, knowledge, and gardens. Maynard has served as a former Regional Vice-President, and is founder and former president of the Francis Scott Key chapter. Retta is chairman of the membership committee and formerly held the position of Landscaping Committee chairman.

I'm sure you'll all agree that these are five very good reasons for making the Regional Convention a "must" but we are offering even more to tempt you. In addition to the reception and slide program on Thursday evening for early birds and our iris auction on Friday evening, the highlight of the Grand Banquet on Saturday evening will be our guest speaker, Ben Hager, whose subject will be "What's in An Iris Catalog". I'm sure this will be very interesting as well as informative, and we are all looking forward to meeting and hearing Ben.

For those of you who will not be attending the Regional board meeting on Friday afternoon, a special treat has been planned in the way of a trip to the Harvey Smith Ladew Topiary Gardens. The following is an excerpt from their brochure:

"The Harvey Smith Ladew Topiary garden, a creation of one man's genius and imagination, is well known for its fine collection of topiary, the extensive sculptured hedges, and for its

display of blooms throughout the growing season. The Garden is actually a composite of numerous small garden rooms, hidden among the trees, and tucked away in the most unexpected places. One must actually see the garden to appreciate its uniqueness; and by so doing, one is helping to preserve a most unusual part of America's horticultural heritage."

The Gardens are located on Jarrettsville Pike, fourteen miles north of Towson. As the Francis Scott Key chapter has a membership in the Foundation, we are able to offer our guests admission to the gardens at the reduced rate of \$1.00. Funds go to improve and maintain the gardens. Francis Scott Key members will be offering a car pool to the gardens, and we suggest you make every effort to visit them. You wouldn't want to miss the life size topiary hunt scene, nor the life size giraffe!

All things considered, we are going to make this a convention not to be missed, and we're looking forward to extending our Maryland hospitality to all of you on May 28th and 29th.

PROFILE: BEN HAGER

by Keith Kappel

The place: the sleepy, little Monterey County community of Aromas. The time: All Fools' Day in the year 1915. The occurrence: the first appearance of Benjamin Ross Hager.

The following month the Hager family moved southward, and Ben spent his pre-adult years in northern San Diego County and Orange County. Once out of school, he began a varied career which has included working in restaurants, the designing and making of ceramics, a stint in the army, bee-keeping, and working on a banana boat. The boat traversed the western coast of Mexico and put in at such famous ports as Manzanillo, Acapulco, and Puerto Vallarta, back in the days before Liz Taylor, Richard Burton, and all the gringos brought it such notoriety.

It was while Ben was in the ceramics business in Capistrano Beach that a friend gave him two lug boxes full of un-named

irises. The irises were added to a garden occupied by glads and mums. The following year—1951—he made his first iris crosses. (Among the two lugs-full there were PURISSIMA, SIERRA BLUE, MISSOURI, and countless other never-identified treasures.)

But it was at the Pasadena Flower Show, where Sylmar Gardens had put in a commercial display, that he really got hooked on irises. In the Sylmar display was an iris that stopped him in his tracks: ROCKET! Checking the catalogue, he found he could get ROCKET free by ordering a \$15.00 collection of 50¢ varieties. He was sold!

The following spring he entered his first iris show. Being new at such things, he spent quite a bit of time checking details with the clerk at the entry table. So much time, in fact, that another exhibitor, bent on winning sweepstakes, had time to assemble his complete array of entries on the floor directly behind Ben. His questions on entries finally answered, Ben turned from the entry table and fell—full length—into the competing entries.

His entry of MASTER CHARLES won a blue ribbon over its competitors (due to the “fall-out,” perhaps?), and he won, as a prize, a rhizome of SAVAGE.

Fools rush in—and the following year he was show chairman. From the show he took pollen of MOLTEN and put it on the SAVAGE he had won the year before. The cross yielded FORAY, which was later to be Ben’s first tall bearded introduction.

His first taste of commercial iris production came when he went to work for Tom Craig. Tom used to tell how Ben saved FRIEDA’S FAVORITE for posterity. It had been a bloom-out, but Ben hilled soil around it and fed it hormones, vitamins, and what—have—you, until it finally threw increase.

Then for two years he worked as field manager for Milliken Gardens. There, exposed to Carl Milliken’s sensational spuria WADI ZEM ZEM, he began to broaden his iris breeding interests. The cross which produced ELIXIR was made at Milliken’s.

At the iris shows Ben had met Sid DuBose. Later, he got Sid a job at Milliken’s. When Peg Dabagh told them of an iris garden in Modesto which was for sale, the two men decided to go into partnership. In the fall of 1955 they moved to Modesto and took

over the business which Irma Melrose had built. The following spring saw the first catalogue of the "new" Melrose Gardens.

They stayed in Modesto four years, but when the Melrose ranch property was sub-divided they had to look for new acreage. In the fall of 1959, they began to move to their present ten acre location east of Stockton, where Ben has been ever since except for a short time when, following Lloyd Austin's death, he helped to manage Rainbow Hybridizing Gardens in Placerville.

* * * * *

The Board of Directors of the A.I.S. voted the Hybridizer's Medal to Ben Hager in 1973 and this award was presented to him at the 1974 Annual Convention in Roanoke. His achievements in hybridizing are readily evident from the many awards that his introduced varieties have won.

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1975 | Award of Merit | SWIZZLE, IB |
| 1974 | Caparne Award (MDB) | THREE CHERRIES |
| | Nies Award (Spuria) | MARILYN HOLLOWAY |
| | Award of Merit (SDB) | PUPPET |
| 1973 | Cook-Douglas Medal (SDB) | REGARDS |
| | Morgan Award (SIB) | SWANK |
| 1972 | Nies Award (Spuria) | PORT OF CALL |
| 1971 | Debaillon Award (LA) | DELTA KING |
| 1970 | Award of Merit (SDB) | REGARDS |
| 1969 | Nies Award (Spuria) | CONNOISSEUR |
| 1967 | Nies Award (Spuria) | ELIXIR |

REGIONAL AUCTION

Friday night, May 28

NEEDED ! Irises to be auctioned

Won't you help support the activities of the Region by donating one or more rhizomes of recent introductions? I'll start it off by giving one rhizome each of VANITY (Hager '75) and PRIDE OF IRELAND (NOYD '71). Just send a post card to me, Roy Epperson, 1115 Delk Drive, High Point, N.C. 27262, indicating the number of rhizomes and the varieties that you are donating. Please mail the card so I will receive it by May 24.

NEEDED ! Members to bid on the iris at auction.

Plan to attend the Regional meeting and to participate in the Regional Auction.

I hope to hear from you and see you in Towson!

NOTICE FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS OF REGION 4

Article VII — Committees

Now reading "There shall be the following standing committees:

Budget, Membership, Publicity, Public Relations, Youth, Judges Training, Auction, Test Gardens, Robins and Editor of Regional publication Newscast."

Proposed changes: — to add after "Auction" and Awards; to delete "Robins".

This constitutes advance notice as stipulated in the bylaws.

Rena M. Crumpler
Ann Dasch
E. Roy Epperson
Helen M. Johnston

CONVENTION HEADQUARTERS FOR 1976

Quality Inn — Towson
1015 York Road
Towson, Maryland 21204

Limousine service is available to and from Baltimore-Washington International Airport.

RESERVATIONS should be made with the motel sales office; state that you are with A.I.S.

To telephone the motel office: 301-825-9190.

The motel is located near Exit 26 South of the Baltimore Beltway (Route 695).

Rates are as follows: Single \$19.50 , plus 7% tax
 Double \$23.50 , plus 7% tax
 Under age 16, free!

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The following is the Report of the Nominating Committee, Region 4, A.I.S., for 1976-77:

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Parliamentarian: Mrs. Russell M. Johnston, P. O. Box 209, Salem, Va. 24153

Historian and Librarian: Mrs. Henry H. Purdy, 107 Goldsboro St., Easton, Md. 21601

Mrs. Eloise Nenon, Chairman—Virginia
Mr. Glenn Grigg, Jr.—North Carolina
Mr. Sam M. Owens, Jr.—West Virginia
Mr. Henry Purdy—Maryland

C YOUTH R N E R

IRIS SHOW

Each of us as a gardener enjoys having visitors coming to see our gardens. We are inwardly (and outwardly) pleased with our selection of varieties, the degree of cultural perfection that we have attained. We also enjoy visiting the gardens of other growers of iris.

However, viewing iris in the garden does not give us the opportunity to do a side-by-side comparison of a stalk of "SUPERLATIVE" in our own garden with a stalk from the garden of John Proud. The iris show gives us this opportunity and also gives us further opportunities to interest other gardeners in the beauty of the iris as well as the joy and deep satisfaction achieved through growing a healthy clump and exhibiting a stalk of show quality.

What constitutes a stalk of show quality? What criteria do the judges use in awarding ribbons to stalks on the show bench? Iris shows are judged by accredited judges of the American Iris Society. These judges have become accredited through attendance at several training sessions conducted by other judges experienced in the many aspects of the growing and exhibiting of iris. The tall bearded specimen is judged on the basis of: Flower-color, size, substance, form; Stalk-number of open flowers and evidence of further bloom, branch balance, bud placement; Condition-grooming, cultural perfection. The flower, of course, is judged according to the variety. It is essential to remember that the condition of the specimen is as important as the flower, and the stalk is nearly so. On a 100 point basis only 35 points are allotted to the flower.

About a week before the show, begin to study your bloom possibility carefully. Look for sturdy, straight, well-balanced stalks. Those showing possibilities of three or more open flowers at the same time should be given special attention. It is much better if the top flower is one of these.

You might want to cut the stalks for the show a day or two before the show opens so the stalks will open indoors away from the hazards of wind and weather. If it appears that the selected bloomstalk(s) will open too early, then cut them and place the stalk in cold water in a cool dark place. Change the water each day and use ice cubes if needed. You can sometimes force an opening by using warm water and placing the stalk directly under an electric light.

Once you have selected the bloomstalks, then they must be transported to the show site. Any kind of carton is satisfactory so long as the blooms and stalk are not scarred or damaged. You might use a bucket with chicken wire as a holder for the stalks. You might use milk bottles in a divided carrier. There are many successful ways to transport show stalks.

Final grooming and placement takes place at the show. Then it is out of your hands! Just wait for the verdict of the judges and hope that the judges agree with you on what constitutes a "blue ribbon winner."

INTRODUCING FIRST CHOICE TO REGION 4

All tall-beardededs from PROGENITOR lines

- SPINNING WHEEL (Nearpass 1976) Reg. 1974
 Bronze bearded plicata \$25.00
- PINK PICOTEE (Nearpass 1976) Reg. 1973
 Tricolor pink plicata \$25.00
- ROSE TATTOO (Nearpass 1976) Reg. 1973
 Rose standards, fancy-plicata falls \$25.00

The following three: Formal introduction, no plants for sale. Stock is already distributed.

- PEACH PAISLEY (Nearpass 1976) Reg. 1968
- MID VICTORIAN (Nearpass 1976) Reg. 1970
- HOMEWARD BOUND (Nearpass 1976) Reg. 1970

Send for more complete descriptions.

D. C. Nearpass, 9526 50th Pl., College Park, Md. 20740

IRIS SHOWS IN REGION 4 IN 1976

CHARLOTTE IRIS SOCIETY AND WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Date: May 1, 1976
Location: Charlotte, N.C.
Chairman: Mr. B. J. Brown

BLUE RIDGE CHAPTER

Date: May 15, 1976
Location: Roanoke Garden Center
Chairman: Mrs. J. E. Rucker
Theme: "Blue Ridge Heritage"
Hours: 3:00 — 9:00 p.m.

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Date: May 15, 1976
Location: Holly Hill Mall, Burlington, N.C.
Co-Chairman: Mrs. Alice Bouldin and Mrs. Polly Price
Hours: 1:00 — 6:00 p.m.

MARYDEL CHAPTER

Date: May 20, 1976
Location: The Fire House, Easton, Md.
Chairman: Mr. Richard Kleen
Theme: "Flags on Parade"
Hours: 2:30 — 8:30 p.m.

THE BEARDED IRIS

A. M. S. Pridham

Reprinted from Cornell Extension Bulletin 324

January 1937

The bearded iris is preeminently a garden flower and has few rivals in wealth of color. Seldom do plants offer such remarkable examples of fine proportion, form, and texture. It is the appreciation of these characteristics that makes the iris enthusiast a keen observer and explains his never-ending experiments in the location and composition of his iris groups with relation to sun and shadow, to neighboring plants, and to background.

With few exceptions bearded irises are perfectly hardy and easily cultivated. One or two important rules must, however, be followed. Irises demand a well-drained soil and must have plenty of sunlight. The plants will thrive in relatively poor soil and can stand surprising periods of drought. They will flourish in rich, well-prepared soils, light or heavy, and will benefit by abundant watering just before the flowering period.

The iris is particularly valuable in the garden. The innumerable gradations and combinations of the light tones of yellow, lavender, white, and pink can be used effectively for massing, especially where the sunlight will play on them and against a dark background of foliage. The deeper tones of purple and red-purple are excellent for accent, while the wide selection of blends, bicolor, and plicata types make interesting specimen plants whose value is enhanced by the gracefulness of the stems and by the shape of the flowers themselves.

The actual placing of the plants in the garden becomes as intricate a matter as the arrangement of cut flowers or as the painting of a picture. It is well to study the location of each group from the various rooms in the house, from the porch, and from a garden seat.

To devote the whole garden to iris is a mistake, for after the flowers have gone one soon tires of the foliage. If the garden is large, an appropriate background will make large groups of irises not only possible but desirable. In the small garden, a few light groups of irises will fit effectively into the garden picture.

Background is important and deserves careful consideration. Background limits the view, usually at the eye level, and one's

attention is focused on the immediate foreground. The garden picture itself must, by its variety of interest, hold one's immediate attention. The fact that the background is almost immediately behind the flowers demands even further thought in the location of the individual groups of flowers. This applies especially to the effects of sunlight and shadow and to the height, form, and texture of the plants themselves.

Evenness of texture and of color is desirable regardless of the plant material used as a background. A row of mixed shrubbery is seldom satisfactory, though a single shrub in full bloom with suitable irises in the foreground may create a picture. With a broad foreground of grass, a group of irises against *Spirea vanhouttei*, *Rosa hugonis*, the light green of *Carageana arborescens*, or the purple foliage of the beech, and a suggestion of trees beyond makes a splendid picture.

Occasionally irises are silhouetted against the sky by planting them on the top of a terrace. They are more successfully silhouetted against distant trees or an expanse of green lawn. If used against a drab stone wall or a rockery, large masses of light colors will prove ineffective, for the delicate tones blend in with the dark shadows of the crevices. Even when masses are used the beds should be narrow; an 8-foot bed is ideal for delphinium but a 4-foot one is more suitable for iris.

The list of annual and perennial plants with which iris can be successfully used is a long one, and the individual selection must be largely a matter of personal taste. Low-growing plants, such as violets, petunias, annual phlox, and others of compact growth should not be used among the iris clumps. These plants spread rapidly, shading the rhizomes and keeping them moist so that disease finds an easy foothold. Plants like the peony, which do not carry their foliage down to the ground level and which flower well above the iris, are ideal. Tulips and other bulbous plants are frequently recommended and are often very effective companion plants.

MACRONOCTUA ONUSTA

Roy Epperson

Entomologists call it *Macronoctua onusta*. You and I call it that%# +***!! iris borer!! No matter what it is called this iris pest can and does make periodic visits to iris plantings and without the proper garden cleanliness and spraying can wreak havoc on the foliage and then on the rhizome itself.

How do you know that the borer is there? In early spring from mid-March to June you may see small pinholes in the leaves, or the young leaves notched or with ragged edges after blossoming. Then a slimy watery appearance on the base of the leaves and plants or the bases or edges of young leaves "bleed." In addition to this injury, the insect responsible for the injury can be seen if careful examination of the plant is made. The eggs are usually found on old leaves or debris near the ground or in cracks in the exposed roots. When they are first laid the eggs are white, but in time they will be found to have various colors.

The eggs, which overwinter, hatch in the early part of the spring. The young larvae bore down the fan, chewing indiscriminant small holes in the leaves as they work their way down. As the larvae (white shaded with red, with a distinct brown head) become larger they chew off larger pieces of leaf along the edges of the center leaves and eventually work their way into the rhizome, reducing it in time to a mere shell. In mid-August the larvae pupate in the soil and the adults begin to appear in mid-September and continue to emerge until late October.

How can you control this pest? The most effective method is to insure that you remove all debris from around your iris plants each fall and spring and by applying a suitable insecticide when the eggs hatch, which is generally when the leaves are about six inches high. Repeat spraying every two weeks until bloom starts should give adequate control.

What insecticides should you use? The most effective one that we have had is DDT. However, since that is now banned by law mainly due to its persistence, other less persistent, although in several instances more toxic, insecticides have been developed. SEVIN, CYGON, and LINDANE are currently on the market and have been proved effective on the iris borer. Use these materials only with proper caution as each of them is very toxic to humans!

Even with effective insecticides however, we must remember that once the larvae get into the iris leaf or rhizome no amount of spraying will do any good. You must get him out by hand! This can be a back-breaking and highly frustrating task! Avoid this by keeping your iris plantings clean (especially in the fall) and by using a regular spray schedule starting in mid-March or early April, depending on the weather!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Helen Rucker

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

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Rev. James S. Petty, 6215 Bren Mar Drive, Alexandria, Va. 22312.

Mr. Orlando Ridout, IV, R.F.D. 10, Box 140, Annapolis, Md. 21401.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY CHAPTER

The Hardy Garden Club, Mrs. L. C. Muth, 1203 Carrellton Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21204.

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Mrs. Frank J. Williams, Box 6065, Stonewall Station, Charleston, W. Va. 25302

VIRGINIA—BLUE RIDGE CHAPTER

Mr. and Mrs. Andre Viette, Rt. 1, Box 16A, Fishersville, Va. 22939.

TRANSFER— C&P to FRANCIS SCOTT KEY CHAPTER

Mrs. John N. Trudell, 566 Williamsburg Lane, Odenton, Md. 21113.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

CHESAPEAKE AND POTOMAC

Mrs. Fernanda Hogroian, 2751 N. Randolph St., Arlington, Va. 22207.

Mr. Ira A. Penn, 15105 Middlegate Rd., Silver Spring, Md. 20904.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

Mrs. Robert E. Dasch, Miss Valerie Dasch and Mr. Robert Dasch, 4831 Deer Park Rd., Owings Mills, Md. 21117.

BLUE RIDGE CHAPTER

Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg, Box 5691, Radford College, Radford, Va. 24142.

CONFUSED — FRUSTRATED — PERPLEXED
And Yet an Ardent Hybridizer
F. Boyd Squires

If you are an expert hybridizer do not read this article—it may not be for you.

This all began about thirty years ago when I first began crossing irises. All I wanted to do was to create pretty flowers. I had heard nothing of the necessity of recording my crossings so that I might find my task easier and more rewarding. All I'd do was to take pollen from one iris and hybridize another which I knew by name. My scanty notes: WABASH crossed—SNOW FLURRY crossed—AMIGO crossed, etc. I had never been told to also record the name of the pollen parent. Still, some of the seedlings resulting from these crosses were GOOD — and PRETTY.

Most of the irises I had at that time had been given to me. I knew only a few of them by name. To the better and more rare of my seedlings I gave names—even naming one WONDERFUL ONE, and a sister seedling WONDERFUL TOO. I didn't know then that Cliff Reynolds would later use the first of these names.

To avoid confusion I began keeping proper records. I had a small yard or garden, making it necessary, as you can readily guess, for me to plant my seeds here and there where space permitted. Later I probably, most likely did, plant other seed crossings in or too near the same rows where left-over ungerminated seeds from the previous planting still remained. Naturally, I threw away most of the seedlings after a first year bloom showing—but not knowing that all iris seeds do not germinate the first year is most likely the reason for causing me doubt as to ancestry. To eliminate part of my confusion resulting from the impossible variation of bloom, a fellow hybridizer told me to remove the old soil from, and surrounding, the rows where earlier plantings had been made and replace with clean new soil before again planting in the same spot or space.

The real complexity occurred or resulted from having too many seedlings which I had planted in rows anywhere space was available. I made map records of locations of seeds planted in various parts of the garden, but my records for almost the next ten years showed extra seedlings growing in or near these

locations. No advice ever came my way to help solve this conglomeration or mix-up of blooms.

Intending to be helpful, but seemingly adding to my predicament, a friend hybridizer in this area gave me some good advice in an attempt to ease my concern and befuddlement—he said, “Boyd, it’s very easy to make an error in iris crossings. I occasionally wash my hands, and more frequently the tweezers I am using—it acts as a safeguard against a stray grain or two of pollen becoming involved where it shouldn’t.” Heaven only knows what a mixture of pollen I might have had on my unwashed tweezers. Sometimes I’d turn the stamen around in my fingers in order to use the pollen from the opposite end. What a mixture of pollen must have resulted from this practice. A hybridizer’s headache, if ever there was one !!

Now, after filling five record books — and washing my tweezers often — and changing the soil — and avoiding the planting of extra left-over seedlings in the “odd and ends” portion of my garden, when questionable bloom occasionally still appears — can any of you tell me truthfully what the blank-ity-blank cross was. You may have to impound my records and tapes.

In your hybridizing efforts I hope none of you have made the same fallacious errors as I have. Yet, as confused, perplexed and frustrated as I seem to be, I know some of my seedlings are true to the cross. Don’t despair — I know of two Dykes Medal winners where some question arises as to their ancestry.

Really, in conclusion, this short article is written to help beginning hybridizers by cautioning them against following anything but correct procedure. Then, when the “real beauty” shows up in their gardens—as surely it will—they can be reasonably sure of it being THE REAL THING.

(Reprinted from Region 12 Year Book 1974)

DON'T CROSS ME !!

Boyd Squires

I am a tall iris with four well-spaced branches and a terminal bud. I am a reverse amoena of rare coloring. My standards are deep pink—my wide flaring falls are pure white, and my beard is a light shade of orchid. Some iris people see me as a color break. But, be it as it may, I ask myself why shouldn't I be. I think of me as being gorgeous—coming, as I do, from a royal lineage involving NIGHT HERON, GAY IMAGE and CHRISTMAS TIME. I feel, and I am quite sure you can see why I think of me as being almost perfect. It could be so, in my opinion, if my beard were a deeper shade of orchid—and if my falls were laced and ruffled.

Many irisarians come to view my beauty. Hybridizers beg for some of my pollen—other iris lovers wish to buy me. Some have tried to borrow my pollen, or even get a piece of me without being noticed. My owner dug me, separated my rhizomes, and replanted me in a front row position where all viewers could more enjoy my loveliness. It was really a traumatic experience, being divided into smaller root parts to increase my number of rhizomes.

You should see me now, with four or five beautiful blooms on each stalk! And, do people take pictures of me? Indeed they do—and MANY. With all this attention—all this admiration—I have but one request—DON'T CROSS ME—unless you are prepared—unless you are sure of the accomplishment you have in mind. With such regal ancestral influence as is mine, I don't want just any old bumblebee, any amateur or novice hybridizer coming in my direction with, most likely, some unsuitable pollen which could easily jeopardize the probability of my desires of parenthood not being fully and rewardingly met. I want to submit or surrender to a learned hybridizer who knows which flower or flowers in his or her garden will most likely 'mate for' or provide a worthy cross — one which will give the deeper colored orchid beard I seek—and also dress or adorn my descendants in ruffles and lace. By being prepared I mean the hybridizer **must know** the pedigree lines of his selected pollen parent. He must also have, or use, a proper marker which will have still remained intact when my seeds are matured.

Still speaking of hybridizers, I see two coming now—partially equipped and hopeful of making some iris crossings. As devices

for labelling markers, one uses a short six-inch narrow strip of paper with a slit opening through it at one end. After making the cross and writing the pollen parentage on this paper he gently draws or wraps it around my stem by inserting the other end of the paper through the slit and pulling it up firmly. The other method, that of using a round oblong tag with a string attached, follows the same procedure, except for the looping of the string similarly around my stem. To me, neither method seems quite adequate. I wonder if either can remain intact through the summer rains and sunshine — as they must do until my seeds are matured. I hold my breath — I silently pray these two DON'T CROSS ME.

My owner shouldn't cross me either—not really. Twice in his attempting to do so he has fumbled. Both times he has placed pollen on some of my magnificent flowers, only to be interrupted before getting the parentage marker in place by his wife calling out, "Dinner is ready". Dropping his task, as all good husbands do, or should do, he hurried in to eat his meal. Later, upon returning to his unfinished cross, he couldn't remember the pollen source or parentage—much less which flowers he had crossed (poor confused soul!).

After long waiting, here comes a new idea! This approaching hybridizer brings along a roll of masking tape and a reliable marking pen. He makes the cross; he is now writing the correct information on the masking tape. He will next tear off a piece of the tape with the necessary information thereon—five or six inches—which he will carefully fold snugly, but not too tightly to cause discomfort, around my stem immediately below the flower or flowers he has just crossed. Lastly he will press the gummed surface of the tape together to hold it permanently in place—an action resulting in accuracy of the whole procedure.

Too bad my owner didn't take time enough to properly cross me before going to his dinner. He overlooked the most important thing in making or completing a cross. It is often difficult, if left undone at the time, to remember which bloom was selected and crossed—which pollen was used. I've overheard several iris crossers say, "You know, I've done the same thing". Just goes to show that we shouldn't make a cross unless we are fully prepared—especially for mealtime interruptions.

(Reprinted from Region 12 Year Book 1975)

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