

THE MEDIANITE

Quarterly Publication of the Median Iris Society

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SPRING 1989

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The Iris Society of Massachusetts will host a MEDIAN MUSTER north and west of Boston, May 19-21, 1989. Plan now to attend! See details on page 4 in this issue of the MEDIANITE.

PRESIDENT: CARL BOSWELL, 1821 Gross Lane, Concord, CA 94519
VICE-PRESIDENT: JAMES MORRIS, 1 Lake James Court, Florissant, MO 63034
SECRETARY: ETHEL BAUKUS, 10415 W. Montana Place, West Allis, WI 53227
TREASURER: JIM FOREMAN, 1360 West Michaels Road, Tipp City, OH 45371-2028

DIRECTORS:

Term Expiring 1989:	Term Expiring 1990:	Term Expiring 1991:
Terry Aitken	Wilbert G. Sindt	Hooker Nichols
Dave Niswonger	Dorothy Willott	Eugene Tremmel

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Violet Boone, 340 Reimer Road, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281	(1989)
Carol Lankow, 725 20th Avenue West, Kirkland, WA 98033	(1990)
Ramona Howard, 3303 37th St., Lubbock, TX 79413	(1991)

MIS MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: CAROL LANKOW, 725 20th Avenue West, Kirkland, WA 98033

Please advise Carol of a change of address. REMINDER: Your expiration date is printed after your name on your MEDIANITE mailing label. PLEASE CHECK THIS DATE and renew your membership when necessary. Prompt renewals mean less paper work for our busy membership secretary.

DUES: Single Annual: \$5.50; Single Triennial: \$15.00; Family Annual: \$8.00; Family Triennial: \$22.50. MIS and AIS memberships need not have the same expiration date. Is yours an annual membership? Why not consider a triennial membership next time you renew? It will mean a savings in time and money for you!

MIS SLIDES CHAIRMAN: TERRY AITKEN, 608 NW 119th St., Vancouver, WA 98686
(For slide ordering information, see AIS Bulletin No., 272, January 1989)

MIS SYMPOSIUM: GENE TREMMEL, 5613 Wallings Road, North Royalton, OH 44133

MEDIAN ROUND ROBINS: BARBARA GIBSON, 13253 McKeighan Road, Chesaning, MI 48616
(There are a number of median robins now in flight, and there is always room for new members. Robins are a great way to meet and stay in touch with other median iris growers and hybridizers. JOIN TODAY!)

MIS DISPLAY GARDENS: JIM MORRIS, 1 Lake James Court, Florissant MO 63034
(Get on the bandwagon! Send Jim a note telling him you'd like to be listed as a Display Garden!)

MEDIANITE STAFF:

EDITOR: Hooker T. Nichols, 402 7th St., Woodward, OK 73801 Tele: 405-254-5914
SDB. Jim Morris (address on previous page)
IB: Terry Aitken (address on previous page)
MTB: Jean Witt, 16516 25th St., NE, Seattle, WA 98155
BB: Carol Lankow (address on previous page)
PUBLISHER: MIS PRESS, Jim Foreman, 1360 W. Michaels Road, Tipp City, OH 45371-2028

The MEDIANITE gladly accepts reports, articles and photos. Closing dates:

SPRING	March 1	FALL	September 1
SUMMER	June 1	WINTER	December 1

THE PRESIDENT'S PATCH

Here it is February and I know it must be spring because the weeds are growing faster than the irises. My days are busy getting the garden ready for Judges Training in March.

For those of you who will be attending the A.I.S. National Convention in Memphis, the Median Board Meeting will be Saturday, April 29 at 5:00 p.m. and the Median Section Meeting will be Sunday, April 30 at 12:00 noon. Eric-Tankesly-Clarke will give the program on MTBs. I do hope you can make it. Do come by and say hello. Soapboxes are welcome before and after the meeting.

Please take notes on the Median Irises you see growing, or in shows and send your comments to the Medianite Editor. The mail I received shows that you wish for more Varietal reports, and it is up to you to send them to Editor Nichols. If you will let us know what type of articles you wish to read about, we will bet them for you.

Hooker mailed out requests for articles to our overseas members last Winter. I hope we get some interesting articles back from them.

May each of you have an outstanding bloom season.

Carl Boswell

MEDIAN MUSTER 1989

MAY 19, 20, 21

THE IRIS SOCIETY OF MASSACHUSETTS sponsors the first national median iris mini-convention. On tour will be six gardens hosting nearly 700 guest iris including 266 varieties of the SDB, IB, MTB, and Aril-median classes.

MUSTER HEADQUARTERS: The Lord Bedford Motor Inn
340 The Great Road
Bedford, MA 01730 617-275-6700

Rates: Per single/night \$42 plus 9.7% tax
Per double/night \$48 plus 9.7% tax

Reservations will be handled by the Muster Registrar along with your registration fee. Please indicate number of persons/room and dates desired.

Transportation to and from the Boston area: For those registrants travelling by air please let us know when you expect to arrive. We will try to provide a ride in from Logan Airport or direct you to the limo service. For those registrants travelling by car we will provide travel maps and directions to the hotel.

REGISTRATION FEE: Received by April 1 \$45.00
Received after April 1 \$55.00
No partial registration

Fee includes transportation for two days of garden tours, Friday evening program, lunch and dinner on Saturday, and the Awards luncheon on Sunday.

REGISTRAR: Jan Sacks
45 Elm Street
Bedford, MA 01730 617-275-7723

GARDEN IN THE WOODS TOUR

The Iris Society of Massachusetts has arranged a pre-muster tour of the Garden in the Woods on Friday afternoon, May 19 at 1:30 pm. Bus transportation will be provided to and from the hotel. This special event requires a separate registration fee of \$10.00. Registration will be limited so register early.

The Garden in the Woods is the botanical garden of the New England Wild Flower Society. Spread over 45 gently rolling acres, it is the largest landscaped collection of wildflowers and native plants in the Northeast. Though the Garden blooms throughout the season it is generally agreed that mid-May is the peak season of bloom.

Following the tour there will be a reception at the gardens of Carol Hull and Helga Andrews conveniently located near the Garden in the Woods.

MIS DISPLAY GARDENS.

Earlier this year I was asked by MIS President Jayne Ritchie to reactivate the Median Iris Society Display Gardens. Starting with a list of gardens that was printed in the Spring 1983 issue of The Medianite, together with personal contacts, I sent a solicitation mailing to 112 MIS garden owners.

Alas, response was sporadic and slow. It varied from high enthusiasm on the positive side to total apathy of no response to repeated follow-up letters. It was sad to see some gardens fall by the wayside because the owner felt they were too old to maintain a display garden any longer. On the other hand, the vitality expressed by other irisarians was downright catching.

The purpose of the Display Gardens is to provide locations where median irises can be seen by irisarians and other gardeners who might enrich their gardening experience and pleasure by growing medians.

DISPLAY - PUBLICIZE - REPORT

The requirements are simple:

- (1) that the owner agrees to grow a representative number of good medians, preferably, but not necessarily, including some of each type;
- (2) that the owner welcomes visitors and publicity about their garden; and
- (3) that the owner fills out a brief report form at the end of the blooming season.

Display Garden owners are not required to accept guest irises but should welcome them if they have space. Display Garden guest irises are not to be used in hybridizing except with the permission of their owners. Display Garden owners will be listed in The Medianite by AIS Region with the following code:

- W = median guest irises wanted
- * = please ask first, some median guests may be displayed, space limited.
- N = median guest irises not requested.

MIS DISPLAY GARDENS

REGION 1

- W Mrs. Maurice B. Pope, 39 Highland Ave., Gorham, ME 04038
- * Mrs. David (Barbara) Schmieder, 566 Old Road to Nine Acre, Concord, MA 01742
- * Mrs. Marian H. Schmuhl, 7 Revolutionary Ridge Rd., Bedford, MA 01730

REGION 2

- * Mrs. Wendy K. Roller, 251 Bonesteel St., Rochester, NY 14616
- W Mr. John Schueler, 2620 Lamson Rd., Phoenix, NY 13135

REGION 3

* Mr. Sterling U. Innerst, 2700A Oakland Rd., Dover, PA 17315

REGION 4

W Mr. Richard C. Sparling, 18016 Lafayette Dr., Olney, MD 20832
* Mr & Mrs. Mike (Anne) Lowe, Rt.3 Box 135, Blackstone, VA 23824
* Mr. Dennis Stoneburner, 2114 Avenel Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24015

REGION 5

None

REGION 6

W Mrs. Otho (Violet) Boone, 340 Reimer Rd., Wadsworth, OH 44281
* Miss Mary Louise Dunderman, 480 White Pond Dr., Akron, OH 44320
W Mrs. Barbara Gibson, 13253 McKeighan Rd., Chesaning, MI 48616
W Mrs. Bernard (Emma) Hobbs, 3303 Westfield Rd, Noblesville, IN 46060
W Mrs. Roger (Lynda) Miller, 3167 E. US 224, Ossian, IN 46777
W Mr.& Mrs. Anthony Willott, 26231 Shaker Blvd, Beachwood, OH 44122

REGION 7

None

REGION 8

* Mr. Melvin Bausch, 11530 N. Laguna Drive, Mequon, WI 53092
W Mr. Walter Doehne, 1941 Castle Ave, St. Paul, MN 55430
W Mrs. Zula Hanson, 7124 Riverdale Rd, Minneapolis, MN 55430
W Mrs. Sandra J. Lemmer, W162 N9917 Mayflower Dr, Germantown, WI 53022

REGION 9

* Mr. Donovan Albers, 109 N. Prater, Northlake, IL 60164

REGION 10

None

REGION 11

None

REGION 12

None

REGION 13

W Mr. Terry Aitken, 608 NW 119th St, Vancouver, WA 98685
* Mr. Jack Boushay, 4867 Mission Creek Rd., Cashmere, WA 98815
* Mrs. Frances Hawk, 4913-1/2 Woodland Park N, Seattle, WA 98103
Call first (206) 633-4240, after 5:00 pm.
Garden address: 518 NE 88th, Seattle, WA 98115
* Mr. Bennett C. Jones, 5635 Southwest Boundary St., Portland, OR 97221

* Mrs. George Lankow, 725 20th Avenue W, Kirkland, WA 98033
* Schreiner's Gardens, 3625 Quinaby Rd NE, Salem, OR 97303

REGION 14

* Mr. Carl H. Boswell, 1821 Gross Lane, Concord, CA 94520

REGION 15

W Mrs. Beverly Dopke, 13433 North 15th Dr, Phoenix AZ 85029
* Vanowen Iris Gardens, Judith & David Mogil, 23337 Vanowen St,
Canoga Park, CA 91307

REGION 16

None

REGION 17

* Mrs. Charles (Ramona) Howard, 3303 37th, Lubbock, TX 79413

REGION 18

W Mr. Roy Bohrer, #1 Summer Court, O'Fallon, MO 63366
W Mr. & Mrs. Frances Boyd, 7300 Hillsboro-House Springs Road, Cedar Hill, MO 63016
* Mr. James Fry, 2640 North Bluff Road, Wichita, KS 67220
* Mr. James W. Morris, 1 Lake James Court, Florissant, MO 63034
W Mr. Robert Pries, 6023 Antire Road, High Ridge, MO 63049
* Mrs. Harry E. Spence, 207 Loomis, McPherson, KS 67460
* Betty Wyss, 12413 South Liberty, Independence, MO 64055

REGION 19

W Mrs. Violet Edson, 1 Buttonwood La, Warren NJ 07060

REGION 20

* Mr. Harry B. Kuesel, 4 Larkdale Dr, Littleton, CO 80123
W Mrs. Karen Schultz, 15643 East 35th Place, Aurora, CO 80011

REGION 21

W Mr. Larry Harder, Ponca, NE 68770
W Mr. Lester Hildenbrandt, Star Route Box 4, Lexington, NE 68350

REGION 22

* Mr. Paul Black, 3409 N. Geraldine, Oklahoma City, OK 73112
Mailing address: P.O. Box 12982, Oklahoma City, OK 73157
* Rilla M. Hickerson, 915 South Canton Ave, Tulsa, OK 74122
* Mrs. Dorothy Howard, 226 East 20th St., Tulsa, OK 74119
W Nichols Display Garden, 402 7th St, Woodward, OK 73801
Mailing List: Hooker Nichols, Box 702, Woodward, OK 73801

REGION 23

W Mrs. Valerie White, 1428 Stagecoach Lane SE, Albuquerque, NM 87123

REGION 24

None

1989 MIS NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The MIS Nominating Committee wishes to thank the people who so graciously accepted nomination for office.

The Officers are as follows:

President: Carl Boswell, 1821 Gross Lane, Concord, CA 94519
Vice President: Jim Morris, 1 Lake James Court, Florissant, MO 63034
Second Vice President: Hooker T. Nichols, 402 7th St., Woodward, OK 73801
Secretary: Ethel Baukus, 10415 W. Montana Place, West Allis, WI 53227
Treasurer: Jim Foreman, 1360 W. Michaels Road, Tipp City, OH 45371-2028

DIRECTORS:

Term Expiring 1989:

Terry Aitken, 608 NW 119th St., Vancouver, WA 98686
Dave Niswonger, 822 Rodney Vista Blvd., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Term Expiring 1990:

Wilbert G. Sindt, 1331 W. Cornelia, Chicago, Illinois 60657
Dorothy Willott, 26231 Shaker Blvd., Beachwood Ohio 44122

Term Expiring 1991:

Hooker Nichols, 402 7th St., Woodward, OK 73801
Eugene Tremmel, 5613 Wallings Road, North Royalton, OH 44133

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Nominating Chairperson,
Violet Boone

ADAMGROVE

is pleased to offer these new irises for 1989:

from David B. Sindt

FIRE ISLAND. SDB. Perhaps the first red-bearded white SDB. Handsome in its own right, it is proving to be an interesting breeder. [Shaded Pale X (((Happy Birthday x Sun Sparkle) x Roberts 65-R-11-5: Lenna M sib) x (Roberts 65-R-11-5 x Pink Cushion))]. \$15.00

from Carl and Larue Boswell

LADY CREAM. BB. Extremely lacy and broad ivory cream. [Little Bit Orchid X Chartreuse Ruffles]. \$25.00

LEPRECHAUN'S EYELASH. SDB. Cool grey-blue with chartreuse-green eyelash markings around the beards. [(Tanny x Plum Spot) X (Plum-Plum x Tanny)]. \$12.50

OMAR THE TENTMAKER. AB-med. Delicate silvery cast over pastel lilac standards and buff falls. [(Gingerbread Man x l. reichenbachii (balkana) 'Darby') X Welcome Reward]. \$17.50

APRICOT ALA MODE. IB. Creamy apricot standards. Cream falls, edged apricot, with solid apricot hafts. Unique color on an iris introduced for breeders. [Melon Honey X Mandolin]. \$17.50

from Lothar Denkewitz

BLAUGOLD. SDB. Rich gold with blue beards. [(Stockholm x (Laced Lemonade x Snow Elf)) X Galleon Gold]. \$12.50

EISWÜRFEL. SDB. Light blue standards, ice blue falls. [Sky and Snow X unk]. 1st place, Vienna Competition. \$12.50

STINTFANG. SDB. Rich yellow with mahogany brown fall spot. \$12.50

from Emma Hobbs

(Co-Introduced with Miller's Manor)

SPLIT DECISION. SDB. Pure white standards. Silvery violet-rose falls, edged and backed in silver. [(Sea O' Blue x Creamette) X unk]. \$12.50

Detailed descriptions in our 1989 illustrated catalogue, \$1 refundable.

Also for 1989, Adamgrove is featuring an expanded listing of
MORE THAN 70 MINIATURE TALL BEARDED IRISES.
Robust plants. Large supply of most varieties.

You may order from this ad and include \$3.00 postage for orders under \$45.00 (free postage if more). Extras with every order.



Adamgrove
Rte. 1, Box 246
California, MO 65018



THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

IRIS in SOUTHERN ONTARIO

John McMillen R.V.P. Region 16

Growing iris here in Southern Ontario isn't much different than many areas in the U.S. Norwich is just 150 miles east of Detroit and 35 miles north of Lake Erie.

We are in the Northern part of Zone 6. Our prevailing wind is west and because of our distance from Lake Huron we are not in a snow belt. Most severe winter storms occur when they come from the south west, giving us lake effect snow off of Lake Erie. The temperatures can fluctuate from -10 degrees to +35 or 40.

Our Spring begins in late March with the last frost date around mid May.

Our Summer Temperature varies with highs 80-85, occasionally reaching the mid 90's, during late June, July and August. In most seasons our rainfall is sufficient to promote excellent growth for most plant materials.

Our frost date in the fall is mid to late September with some years being mid to late October before there is a hard enough frost to kill the tougher garden plants in protected areas. Garden maintenance is usually possible until mid to late November.

We grow all types of bearded irises with excellent success, unfortunately, due to the lack of popularity here we do not grow as many medians as we would like to.

Siberians excel here as do Spuria's. There is a Japanese garden around which we grow Japanese, Pseudacorus, versicolor and several other species.

We do have 130 S.D.B, I.B., M.T.B. and B.B. all of which grow extremely well.

Our garden has 8-10" of a good clay loam top soil with a ph. of 7.

The Bearded bloom season starts with the M.D.B.'s in late April with the T.B.'s ending in mid June. Planting begins in mid July and can be continued to the end of September. The late planted ones are planted deeper and should definitely be given winter protection.

Newly planted gardens receive no fertilizer as the soil is rich and produces large soft rhizomes that are prone to winter damage and soft rot. In three years when they are replanted we will use a very low nitrogen fertilizer. We use a 16-16-16 fertilizer on the older gardens. Most of the garden is covered with wheat straw for the winter. The straw is left between the rows to rot in order to maintain the organic content of the soil.

Borer can be a problem if not controled, we use Cygon when the plants are 3-4" tall and then a week to ten days later. With these two sprayings we also mix Captan or Benomyl for control of leaf spot.

For weed control we use simazine and devrinol, plus some hand hoeing where needed.

If the current changes in weather patterns continue, we might be forced to change some of our cultural practices. It's too soon to tell if these changes are natural or from the man made greenhouse effect. It's possible that we all may have to adapt to changes in our environment.

I'm somewhat embarrassed to list my favourites as it will no doubt date the collection, however, here are a few

S.D.B. - Be Dazzled, Dash Away, Galeon God, Joyful and Queens Pawn.

I.B. - Butter Cookie, Rare Edition, Pink Kitten, Az Ap.

B.B. - Pink Bubbles, Frills, Marmalade Skies, Prediction.

We bloomed M.T.B.'s in our garden for the first in '88 and there will definitely be more acquired in the future. The favorites were Bumblebee Deelite, Chickee and Real Jazzy.

If you want some background information. I'm President of the Canadian Iris Society and R.V.P. Region 16.

We have a commercial garden that is the largest in Canada with over 10 acres planted and plans for expansion. There is over 1,100 varieties of iris and 150 hemerocallis growing here.

Our garden is open to visitors and we would welcome A.I.S. members who may be travelling through this area.

MIS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Elm Jensen, 804 Grandview Avenue, Wenatchee, Washington 98801

Mr. Scott B. Johnson, 7310 Zanzibar Lane N., Maple Grove, MN 55369

THIRTY YEARS OF MEDIANS

Recently I was asked to write an article about Medians which I had grown during the past thirty years that had made a lasting impression on me. Many of you will probably not agree that these were the most outstanding Medians released, but these are the ones which can still be found tucked away in some part of my extensive iris plantings.

My favorite class of medians just happens to be the Standard Dwarf Bearded. This particular class, throughout the years, has had an over abundant number of new cultivars which should have never left the seedling patch. So many of the new introductions are not significantly improved over their parents, or even their ancestors; nevertheless, by examining the awards given annually to Median irises and specifically to the delightful SDBs which range in height from 9-15" tall, I have found many significant improvements.

Some personal favorites of mine in the SDB class are the following beautiful irises.

AMAZON PRINCESS (H. Nichols '73) a ruffled lemon-yellow beauty with vivid maroon halos and orange beards.

BANBURY RUFFLES (Reath '70) shouts at me with its rich blue flowers and darker blue spots on the falls.

BE DAZZLED (J. Boushay '75) could have larger and better formed flowers, but the rich bright yellow flowers with their interesting red-brown spots around the yellow beards look good every year.

COTTON BLOSSOM (B. Jones '70) never fails to put on a splendid performance yearly with its yellow toned, cool white flowers. Big, fat, wide, ruffled flowers smell great too!

DEMON (Hager '71) just seems to possess the garden visitor with its dark red-black flowers with darker beards.

GINGERBREAD MAN (B. Jones '69) commands attention simply because it was the first really good brown iris in this class with purple undertones.

GOLLY MOLLY (M. Hagberg '83) with its medium blue flowers with near self beards, is mouth watering.

HOOLIGAN (J. Boushay '78) has to be my favorite iris from Jack Boushay. The buttercup colored standards have greyed lavender edges; the falls are the same with yellow beards.

LADY IN RED (Willott '73) gets better every year. A red with a darker wash throughout the flowers, accented by gold and lavender beards.

LILLI-GREEN (Welch '59) spots crisp near green amoena flowers with white beards.

LILLI-WHITE (Welch '58) is still tops in my book for purity of its white coloring.

MARINKA (D. Dennis '64) has exquisitely formed flowers having a greenish-base color with a touch of chocolate in the standards and haft area on the falls, accenting the lavender beards.

MICHAEL PAUL (W. Jones '79) leads the Median popularity polls with its dark purple flowers with generous amounts of ruffles and personality.

MRS. NATE RUDOLPH (H. Briscoe '75) has perfection in form for this class. Flowers are a delightful shade of blended dove-grey with gold shadings and lavender-gold beards.

REGARDS (Hager '67) though not having large flowers, is still great due to its orchid and maroon blended flowers. A touch of ruffling adds a lot to this one.

ROYAL CARNIVAL (C. Palmer '74) is royalty personified, indeed. Dark violet standards are carried over falls of the same color with darker veins and a hint of a halo-spot pattern around the white beards.

RUFFLED SPRITE (A. Brown '70) billows with off white flowers sporting a green-gold blaze around yellow beards.

SAPPHIRE JEWEL (Hamblen '78) startles one with its blue-violet flowers with deep tones and hafts and blue-violet beards.

SKY AND SNOW (Warburton '72) gives many people the idea of being a reverse, near blue amoena. This one still has not been matched in color depth for its class.

STOCKHOLM (Warburton '72) is a fully developed, blended, light yellow lady with violet-blue beards.

TORNADO CAPERS (Roberts '72) blows into the season with grayed-violet flowers with tan spots on the falls around the deep blue beards.

People who check the pedigrees of these irises will find that many of them are related to each other. Nine of the above irises have been awarded the Cook-Douglas Medal which is the top award in the SDB class before they become eligible for the Dykes Medal Award.

Towards the end of the SDB bloom season, the second class of Medians that I will discuss start to bloom. These are the Intermediate Bearded irises. These regal beauties range in height from 16-27" tall and the future holds great things for the hybridizers in this class. The color combinations are unbelievable.

ASK ALMA (C. Lankow '87) looks almost good enough to eat for dessert. The flowers are a blend of corolla-orange with tangerine-white beards. This is a must have for everyone.

AZ AP (Ensminger '80) grows and blooms like a weed. The cobalt-blue flowers have gentian blue beards.

BEDTIME STORY (Richie '82) with its amethyst-violet blended flowers, was certainly a fine choice for the President's Cup at the Seattle Convention.

BLACK WATCH (Rosenfels '72) probably is one of the most overlooked irises in commerce today. This very dark, velvety purple self with matching beards is unequalled.

BUTTERSCOTCH FRILLS (Hamblen '69) is deliciously prepared in yellow and butterscotch with orange-brown shadings and bright, eye-catching beards of orange.

CUTIE (Schreiners '62) grabs your attention with its near white flowers sporting near turquoise-blue blazes.

DANDELION (Warburton '73) makes a commanding display in the garden with dandelion colored flowers and yellow-orange beards. Simple and pretty.

HARLOW GOLD (Black '82) won't let one forget it with its clean, yellow flowers of near perfect form and near self beards.

HELLCAT (Aitken '83) shimmers its dark blue neglecta flowers with dark beards at everyone who crosses its path.

HOT FUDGE (Hager '83) certainly will be popular with those who like plicatas. This yellow ground vividly marked near chocolate-brown plicata with yellow beards simply is marvelous.

KISS ME KATE (Cook '58) still has a special place in both my garden and my heart. A very light sea-foam green self with a narrow margin of wisteria-violet on the edges of the falls and lemon beards. There is nothing like this one currently on the market.

LEMON FLURRY (Muhlestein '65) grows like a weed and its lemon-chartreuse flowers are well formed.

LILLIPINKPUT (Douglas '60) has golden-apricot flowers with tangerine beards. The form could be better, but this one still has class.

LITTLE BIT BLUE (Plough '65) never got the attention it deserved. The flowers are nearly a gentian-blue self with a strange purple cast and the falls have a blended spot of campanula violet. The striking light orange beards add special spice to this one.

OKLAHOMA BANDIT (H. Nichols '80) came as quite a surprise to me in the seedling patch--flashy flowers of bright tawny gold with a claret base and the falls are tawny gold with a claret wash and gold beards.

ORIENTAL BABY (Guenther '63) isn't new, but the colors are delightful. With rosy-beige standards, with chrysanthemum crimson falls, edged the standards color, the yellow beards compliment this beauty.

PEACHY FACE (B. Jones '76) reminds me of peach blended ice cream. The pale peach-white flowers sport a much deeper peach spot on the falls and light peach beards finish out the cool flowers.

PINK KITTEN (Wood '77) often is seen on the show bench with its beautiful shades of blue-pink flowers with blended tangerine beards.

POETIC ART (C. Palmer '83) is a sculptured beauty with ruffles, lace, and personality. Blended pale yellow flowers have light yellow, orange, and white blended beards. This one is also a superb show bench bearded variety.

RARE EDITION (Gatty '80) sparkles and winks at you with its purity of white ground and mulberry-purple plicata markings.

RASPBERRY BLUSH (Hamblen '76) knocks you over with its beauty! The raspberry pink blended flowers with raspberry-red beards just over powers one's thoughts about mystical colorings.

RIKKI TIKI (Rogers '76) was very overlooked and should be widely grown. Standards are greyed-lavender with deeper bases; the falls are ruffled and the same color as the standards with maroon-violet brown veining and this flushes out from the beards into a near halo effect. The violet-blue beards are very nice on this one.

SEA PATROL (C. Palmer '80) struts about with near sky-blue flowers with pale yellow beards.

SHAMPOO (Messick '77) sports beautiful, ruffled bronze-gold flowers with near chocolate bronze beards.

VAMP (Gatty '73) signals attention to itself with deep red-purple standards and the falls are nearly the same color with a tan edge. The accentuating, darker spot surrounds the blue-purple beards.

Fifteen of the mentioned IBs are winners of the Sass Medal, the top award for Intermediate Bearded irises before they become eligible for the Dykes Medal Award.

Border Bearded Irises have a different bloom season than the Intermediate Bearded irises, blooming with the Tall Bearded irises, but, like the IBs, the BBs also have the same height measurements of 16-27" tall.

AM I BLUE (Denney '77) calls visitors to it with its pale blue standards with a darker base and the very pale blue falls with flashy, deep navy-blue beards.

BOTANY BAY (B. Jones '66) still recalls fond memories of my personal preference for blue irises in this class. The lobelia-blue self flowers are tops in my list of favorites.

BROWN LASSO (Buckles-Niswonger '75) won the Dykes Medal in 1981 because this iris is superb. Butterscotch standards and light violet falls have an edge of medium brown with yellow beards.

DESPERADO (Keppel '79) can be a difficult iris to describe, but the green-yellow standards are sanded greyed violet; the falls are more yellow-to-warm white, edged greyed violet with darker colored hafts overlaid brown.

CRYSTAL BAY (B. Jones '66) is nice and nifty with white flowers and a narrowly edged blue border around the falls.

FRENCHI (B. Jones '59) shouts a different color with orange-pink standards and rose violet falls with tangerine beards.

JUNGLE SHADOWS (Sass-Graham '60) never fails to be welcomed in any iris garden. A mysterious blend of brown-grey and purple with brown beards.

MARMALADE SKIES (Niswonger '78) cannot be mistaken for any other iris in this garden in this class. Apricot-orange with pink tinged standards and falls with tangerine beards. Ruffles are a plus on this one!

MISS SCARLET (Moore '80) should be noted for its reblooming traits in the warm climates. A ruffled red self with violet cast around the bronze beards. It is most dependable.

PEBBLES (Tucker '64) is one of the best near reverse blue amoenas. Super indeed!

PINK BUBBLES (Hager '80) looks almost good enough to eat. The clear, light pink flowers have light tangerine beards.

TULARE (Hamblen '61) ranks among the very best of the older BBs and is a golden yellow self with apricot beards.

Nine of the above mentioned Border Bearded Irises have won the Knowlton Medal Award. This is the top award for BB irises before they become eligible for the Dykes Medal.

MINIATURE TALL BEARDED IRISES are the only class of Median Irises which I have not actively grown during the last twenty-five years. Newer, recently released cultivars have gained my attention. They can be said to be delicate, modern versions of the old flags that were common at the turn of the century. The height of the MTBs is from 15-25" tall and the flowers about the same size of SDB irises. I have found that they grow well, once established, and are very vigorous.

My personal favorites in my garden are few and far between. They must really make me notice them.

AACHEN ELF (Kennedy '84) was first viewed in its seedling patch by the writer of this article. The standards are yellow and the lavender falls are edged in yellow. Yellow beards add the final accent on this one.

BIT O' AFTON (Guild '70) speaks softly with its white standards and violet falls edged in white and fuzzy golden beards.

CHARLIE BROWN (Dunderman '66) is a cute little fellow with golden-brown flowers and yellow beards.

CRYSTAL RUFFLES (Dunderman '86) is quite enchanting with ruffled white flowers with a touch of orchid plicata markings at the haft areas and white and orange beards.

PANDA (Dunderman '75) has perky flowers which have dark blue-violet standards with similar falls sporting a near spot around the white beards.

PUPPY LOVE (Hager '80) sports snappy light pink flowers with tangerine beards.

ROSEMARY'S DREAM (Dunderman '82) personally is a highlight of the MTB season for me. Lovely showy flowers have deep rose standards with a near white area in their center; the falls are white with ½" plicata borders of rose; and the beards are deep orange.

SPANISH COINS (Witt '76) sparkles with bright yellow-gold flowers and orange beards.

WHITE CANARY (Roberts '73) is my personal choice for a white ground plicata lightly stitched pale blue with yellow beards.

Six of the above mentioned irises are winners of the Williamson-White Award. This is the top award in the Miniature Tall Bearded class before they can become eligible for the Dykes Medal.

Median irises are easy to grow. They are very vigorous and most rewarding. With the exception of the BBs which seem to have the same growth patterns as the Tall Bearded, you will have to transplant the SDBs, IBs, and MTBs more often than your Tall Bearded plants.

My Medians receive a good dusting of 5-10-5 or 10-20-10 twice a year, usually late February and September. Raising Medians is a wonderful way to begin the yearly iris season and everyone should give them a try.

*(This article was reprinted from the Region 14 Newsletter Volume 33, No. 2, April 1989)

1989 INTRODUCTIONS

The following new M.T.Bs. are being offered at \$15.00 each.

BROWNIE FLY UP - Light brown self.

LILAC TOQUE - Medium violet bi-tone

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GROWING IRISES IN OTTAWA

When our editor asked me to write about my experiences in growing irises in Ottawa, and my favorite median irises, my first reaction was that I wouldn't have anything significant to contribute. I don't grow the latest varieties, and there aren't any comprehensive collections locally that I can visit and comment on.

My latest purchases are usually at least 10 years after introduction. I try to keep up with what is happening, but my favourites remain the varieties of yesterday. But perhaps I can share with you the pleasure I get from my garden, and tell you about which kind please me and grow well in this part of Canada.

I live in Ottawa, Canada and have gardened here all my life. I retired two years ago from the federal public service, and can now devote most of my time to my favourite hobby--growing things. I have only experience in gardening in this part of Canada. I first learned to garden in my father's garden in Ottawa (now full of daylilies), and since 1966, in a larger garden 35 miles southeast of here, at Morewood, Ontario.

Irises are certainly one of my favourite perennials, but I am also keen on growing daffodils, daylilies and peonies. Scented and coloured leaved geraniums are also a year round pleasure.

Though I have had my garden in the country for over twenty years, the weekends, while I was working, seemed to be spent cutting the grass and weeding. For years I have had a couple of gardening projects in the back of my mind. I would love to create a double perennial border, and I would like to develop a kind of Edwardian kitchen garden in which you plant almost everything--neatly in rows--including lots of irises. Foolhardy at age 62? Perhaps, but I intend to have a lot of fun finding out if it can be done.

Last fall I made a start on the kitchen garden, but during the earlier part of the year the weather man didn't cooperate very much. May and early June were very dry, and the rest of the summer was intensely hot. I didn't do much physical labour. Gardening should be a pleasure, not an endurance test.

Ottawa is located in Canada Department of Agriculture Zone 5a, the equivalent of U.S.D.A. Zone 4 (-30° F to -20°F). Most of the soil around here is slightly on the alkaline side (7.5). The family I bought the farm from told me the soil was called "Carleton gravelly loam." It is really a heavy loam, with lots of small stones--just enough to make digging a hole a mildly challenging experience. It is quite fertile, as it grows excellent hay and in a wet year the weeds are stupendous. The drainage is good, as the house and buildings were built on a slight rise in an otherwise flat landscape. We usually get a good snow cover that stays most of the winter. Occasionally we get a winter with little or no snow cover, and sheets of ice that wreck havoc with the garden. Rainfall is usually more than adequate, though we often get a period of drought in July or August.

Our lowest temperature of the winter usually comes in January, and that with the alkalinity of the soil limits the range of things we can grow here. Having said that, we can still grow an amazingly broad spectrum of plants.

I remain loyal to the tailored form of bloom in bearded iris. I can see the beauty of many of the newer hybrids, but I prefer a smaller, more simple type of flower. Narrowness of petal and veins on the petal haft don't bother me, especially if they give the variety a unique charm.

In general, I like the species look in garden flowers, and I guess I subconsciously look for that when I choose the iris for my garden. I'm not very consistent though. Even though I prefer the single flower to the double form, I like many flowers of the Victorian period with their tightly double flowers, but they somehow seem right for that period.

I have always enjoyed growing iris, but until recently, I thought almost exclusively in terms of the tall bearded.

Unfortunately for me, much of the development in the last decade or so in flower form of the tall bearded hasn't been to my taste. I don't particularly like the excessive lacing and ruffling, and the extreme width of petal which is currently in fashion. The hybridizers have been almost too successful in the goals they have set for themselves.

I intend to continue to grow and cherish the tall beardeds I now have, and add to them more recent ones, from time to time, that I truly like. But it is now time to look farther afield.

When I retired, one of the presents I gave to myself was to join all the sections of the American Iris Society, so I could keep up with what is happening.

I'm glad I discovered the median group of irises. They have so much to offer the earlier garden of April and May. They are still in a period of development that appeals to me. From what I read about the criteria to be aimed for, and the type of varieties, I know I will enjoy collecting and growing them for the rest of my time in the garden.

Though I am a newcomer to median irises as a distinct group, I already have a sprinkling of them in the garden. Among the Standard Dwarf Bearded I currently have are: Baria, Golden Fair, Knotty Pine, Lilli-White, Pogo and Tinkerbelle. I would like to get Azure Gem, Baby Blessed, Cotton Blossom, Pale Suede, Plum Wine, Sapphire Jewel, Sky and Snow, Starlight Waltz, and Twice Blessed.

The Intermediates as a group appeal to me very much, especially their time of blooming. The few I have are: Blue Asterisk, Crimson King, Eleanor Roosevelt, Maroon Caper, and White Autumn King. Some I would like to get are Az Ap, Black Watch, Blessed Again, Cheers, Harlow Gold, Honey Glazed, Indeed, Raspberry Blush and Silkengold.

I'm intrigued by the Miniature Tall Bearded--not so much for their true worth (undoubted), but for the largely diploid characteristic of many of them. I collect older forms of diploid iris wherever and whenever I can find them. I would like to try crossing them with the newer MTBs and see what happens. Likely lots of ugly ducklings and way off limits, but perhaps I might get vigorous plants for the garden with a wider colour range. I like the hardiness, vigor and floriferousness of the older forms.

I have never tried my hand at hybridizing, but would like to try. I'm sure I would never develop anything worthy of introduction, but it would be fun to develop something, unique for my garden that I was responsible for, and that would grow well here. I grow only Honorabile, Joseph's Coat and Sherwin-Wright.

Another pet project for retirement gardening is to take a favourite hybrid garden plant whose flower form I don't like and to try to breed it back to a form that pleases me. My "ideal" would be illustrations in old gardening books and catalogues, and those wonderful vases of flowers that artists of past centuries have left us. But I digress!

The only Border Bearded variety I appear to have is the lovely Jungle Shadows.

I have not grown a wide range of iris species as yet, but am looking forward to discovering what will do well for me.

Last year I received a good selection of seed from the SIGNA seed list, and the Species Seed Exchange of the British Iris Society. Planted last fall, I hope some will germinate this spring.

Besides the bearded irises, I grow some older varieties of siberian irises, a few spurias, *I. pseudacorus*, *I. ochroleuca* and *I. versicolor* (which grows wild in the swampy areas around here). Louisiana irises have yet to be discovered by gardeners here, but I intend to try some very soon.

I'm told Japanese irises will grow locally if you adjust the ph of the soil with sulphur, but I have never seen them in gardens in this area. I read that they grow easily from seed, so maybe that is the way to start and see what happens.

A. R. Buckley in his excellent book Canadian Garden Perennials (Hancock House, 1977) has a good description and listing of the species that should grow in this part of Canada. For many years Mr. Buckley was in charge of the Dominion Arboretum and Botanical Garden of Canada, located at the Central Experimental Farm about two miles from where I live.

The gardens at the Central Experimental Farm have produced some good plants for Canadian gardens. Several outstanding plant breeders have worked there over the years.

Miss Isabella Preston worked there between the wars, and developed her series of Siberian iris named after Canadian rivers and lakes (Ottawa, Rideau, Gatineau). She also developed a series of hybrid lilies (the Stenographer lilies), lilacs (*Sgringa x prestoniae*) and the Rosybloom Crabapples.

More recently Dr. Felicitas Svejda developed her "Explorer" series of hardy shrub and climbing roses for Canadian gardens, named after Canadian explorers (Champlain, William Baffin, Henry Hudson and others).

The display gardens at the Central Experimental Farm are a pleasure to visit, and have had a strong influence on gardens and gardening in this part of Canada.

My collection is dated, and will likely remain so, as that is what gives me the greatest pleasure. I suppose it is partly nostalgia, but I think it is important for a certain proportion of gardeners to continue to collect and create a demand for the older varieties of irises, to ensure that they don't totally disappear. There are lots of enthusiasts pushing the frontiers forward, but the number of good varieties that are displaced and disappear each year is sad. Let's hope the best and most distinctive will somehow survive. Only a few have the Dykes Medal to protect them.

As I write this, we are still in the throes of winter. The garden is covered with a good blanket of snow, so things should come through O.K. The older I get the less I like the length of our winter. I love the change of the seasons, but by now (February) I long for spring. The psychological lift of the appearance of the first spring bulbs in April is truly wonderful. Do gardeners farther south, with a less severe winter, and a more gradual coming of spring, experience the same exhilaration? I hope so. Best wishes to you all for a wonderful year in the iris garden.

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Woodward, Oklahoma 73801

MEDIANS IN EDMONTON

With time selected cultivars from the median iris groups may prove ideal for growing in the Edmonton area. With our rugged winters, the tall bearded are less reliable. Besides, with the usual gusty winds of June punctuated by spectacular storms, these primadonnas tend to get flattened.

Winter temperatures have been known to plunge below -40°F and stay very cold for prolonged periods. However, the global greenhouse effect is perhaps responsible for the unusually overall mild winters we've had lately. Still the occasional nasty blasts of arctic air alternating with above freezing temperatures resulting from Pacific systems pumping over the Rockies is tough on perennials. With skimpy snow that tends to melt away predictably too soon in late winter, plenty of careful mulching is a must.

Early May is when the first pumilas and MDBs bloom. Next come the SDB and then the IBs and MTBs, which puts us in about mid-June. Our soil tends to be rich and somewhat alkaline although clay sometimes requires the addition of sand, compost, or peat moss. So far, I've never heard of iris borers here--perhaps the winters are too brutal. The quack grass we have is reputed to grow its rootlike rhizome a foot a day under ideal conditions and can be very vexing in an iris bed. I especially appreciate a fast growing iris that will hold its own.

Some of my favorite medians are Gingerbread Man, Candy Apple, Thunder Eagle, Az Ap, Doll Ribbons, Spanish Coins, and Panda. The SDBs tend to be the most vigorous and hardy. Many may well prove to be low maintenance plants that will require no special winter care at all.

I have a collection of about eight or so medians that have obviously been grown and put over the fence for many years in this area. They range in size from SDB to BB. Some obviously have aphylla blood. The others are variegatas and amoenas. I've been trying to cross some of these with the more modern cultivars with interesting if mixed results. What they lack in form and refinement, they make up with vigour and absolute hardiness. Two of my favorites are:

Emily Grey--A MTB variegata, good branching with ochre yellow standards and claret falls bleeding a lighter hue around the beards on a white ground which also rims the petal. Sets seed readily by MTB diploid pollen.

Mrs. Andrist--An IB to BB sized flower on 24" stalks. A not very well branched amoena with white standards, variable pansy purple falls on a white base. This is the hardiest and fastest growing iris here, infact, its irrepressible, and it is a pity how reluctant it is to set seed.

MEDIANS IN NEW ZEALAND

Here is a list of the delightful medians which we grow on our small Christchurch section of land. Some of them are of poor form and my friends often ask why we don't throw them out, but they flower well each spring. They bring back the smile of the person who gave them to us.

Christchurch is on the East or dry side of the South Island of New Zealand.

The island is divided by a range of mountains--the Southern Alps, which force the moisture laden winds off the Tasman sea upwards into the cooler atmosphere, causing the moisture to condense, which falls as rain on the West side of the mountains, leaving the hot dry winds to buffet the land in the East.

Unless one's garden is sheltered these winds play havoc with the tall bearded irises. That is why we grow mostly median irises.

Our rainfall averages 58 cm. (23 inches) with Summer temperatures up to about 30° C (86° F). Only occasionally do we have snow which seldom lasts more than a few hours.

The following median irises are currently growing in our garden.

Az Ap	Frenchie	Knotty Pine
Banburry Ruffles	Gingerbread Man	Lucy's Blue Silk
Black Watch	Golden Starlet	Manhattan Blues
Coal Bucket	Gracchus	Melon Honey
Copy Cat	Honey Glazed	New Idea
Dear Love	Hot Fudge	Pink Bubbles
Demon	Indian Jewel	Pony
Electric Girl	Irish Doll	Stockholm
Fairy Footsteps	Knockout	White Sprite

Plus the following species:

- I. aphylla
- I. kochii
- I. lutescens
- I. sari
- I. subiflora
- I. variegata

We also have some seedlings grown from seed of our own crosses and from other sources.

MEDIANS IN ENGLAND

I started growing Medians way back in 1959-60 when the pumila crosses of Walter Welch, Paul Cook and others first became available in this country. After the chamaeiris types such as Sound Money, Path of Gold, Little Elsa and Fortissimo, all of them excellent garden plants, but coarse in habit, the pumila crosses, Green Spot, Eyeshadow, Brassie, Blueberry Muffins and a little later Gingerbread Man, were a revelation of grace and charm as well as being full of exciting hybridizing potentialities. I found them to be excellent parents producing vigorous and unusual seedlings. This is still true as the pedigrees of many modern introductions show.

Another oldie Nylon Loveliness and its sib Nylon Ruffles gave me dainty haloed flowers and good foliage. Foliage is getting to be a problem with some SDB crosses. All too many lovely flowers are cursed with over wide leaves, a trait I detest, though I fear some of my early introductions tend to err that way. Maybe a return to outcrossing with I. pumila will help; an idea I have been considering for some time. Alas, the true I. pumila will not grow for me in spite of several attempts. It detests my cold London clay and, I suspect, worst of all, the prevailing cold winter damp of England. With coddling in a cold frame I have kept it a year, but it made no increase and when planted out died.

I try to keep for breeding all seedlings with narrow elegant foliage irrespective of flowers, but I find that foliage can vary from year to year and from garden to garden, so it is not easy to produce a satisfying and reliable plant that will keep its class (aesthetically speaking) irrespective of cultivation.

Looking through my stud books I see that some varieties crop up again and again and are at the back of most of my SDB crosses. To the oldies already mentioned, I would add Velvet Capers, Grace Note, Dark Fairy and Blue Denim as being the most used and of more recent introductions; Cotton Blossom, Stockholm, Bibury (an excellent parent) and Sarah Taylor. They have given me some interesting seedlings. I wish I had some of them now, but there comes a time in every hybridizer's life when special space and energy begin to run out and one has to discriminate and discard. Looking at some of my discards in other people's gardens, I begin to wonder if my discrimination is not at fault.

GROWING MEDIAN IRIS IN WILLOWDALE, ONTARIO, CANADA

First I should tell you that Willowdale is a part of Metro Toronto, on the north shore of Lake Ontario about 40 miles from the western end of the lake. The city has grown, with many large buildings, and our weather seems to be affected. We do not get enough snow. Buffalo, about 60 miles south of us gets many times our snowfall.

Last winter (87-88) was the worst yet. Yo-yo temperatures, fluctuating from 45° F to -10° F, with no snow until February. In early February, we had good snowfall but it started to rain and formed solid ice 3-5 inches deep. That stayed on the garden for about three weeks. Only about a third of my TBs bloomed and many rotted out completely.

The good news was that the Medians fared much better. The SDBs, IBs and MTBs were almost normal. The BBs were so-so.

I grow several old faithfuls that I will not part with. Amigo (Williamson '34) was introduced as a TB but when the Median classification was set up, it was moved to the BB class (not listed in the 1983 checklist). Amigo's light violet blue standards and deep violet purple velvet falls and good form give it a place of honor. SDB Green Spot (Cook '51) white with green spots on the falls and Blue Denim (Warburton '58) powder blue with a fine network of slightly deeper veining and nicely shaped blooms still look good after almost 30 years in my garden. Betsy Boo (Warburton '75) is a pink with deeper pink beards makes a pleasing background for Regards (Hager '67) is a dusty rose taffeta and wine velvet blend. IB Indian Doll (Greenlee '68) is a redder than most iris. Fancy Capter (Warburton '64) almost white heavily marked purple draws much attention.

SDBs Paul (Sindt '83) a creamy yellow with a deeper spot, Intimate (Sindt '85) being a pale peach pink and Wire Rim (Sindt '82) a ruffled white with a wire rim and heart of violet were nice. Idol's Eye (Hager '73) is a ruby red which seems to glow. Cherry Pop (Hager '84) certainly suits its name. Hi Sailor (Gatty '84) a white with a deep blue spot on the falls and Babe (Gatty '82) a snow white with narrow plicata markings in purple were favourites.

I liked Cherry Garden (B. Jones '67) red purple colouring and Rain Dance (B. Jones '79) a beautiful rich medium blue blue. Laced Lemonade (Warburton '69) still looks good with its lacy true yellow blooms. Dark Vader (L. Miller '87) has dark violet standards and almost black falls. Lemon Rings (Aitken '80) was a lemon yellow with a white ring on the falls. Joyous Isle (P. Dyer '81) has French blue standards and soft green falls edged blue and set off with electric blue beards. The unique star shaped flower sets this one apart from others. Michael Paul (W. Jones '79) is always covered with its almost black blooms. It is hard to pick a few but these are some of my favorite SDBs.

Regarding IBs, Bold Print (Gatty '82) and Rare Edition (Gatty '80) both were white with different shades and depth of purple plicata markings. Voila (Gatty '73) and Vamp (Gatty '72) were different shades of violet purple and both have bloomed since 1974. Logo (Keppel '86) is one of Keith's orange ground fancy plicatas that defies description.

Az Ap (Ensminger '80) is a light blue with a deep blue beard. Raspberry Blush (Hamblen '76) was a raspberry pink with deeper flushes on the falls. Hero (L. Miller '87) was a great dark violet self. Hellcat (Aitken '83) has to be mentioned because of its pale blue standards over velvety black purple falls.

Ben Hager's MTB New Wave '86 first caught my eye in Phoenix and has lived up to its promise. In Oklahoma City it was showing off its ruffled pure white blooms in almost every garden and bloomed on a one year plant in my garden. Abridged Version (Hager '83) bloomed beautifully in 1987 and last year in spite of winter damage, managed one bloom stalk. I like the dusty rose coloring. Puppy Love (Hager '80) was a true pink.

Blue Twinkle (Dunderman '76) had lightly ruffled light blue flowers. Chickee (Dunderman '79) was a ruffled medium yellow with good MTB proportion. Doll Ribbons (Dunderman '78) was a nice white and violet plicata. Echo Pond (Sindt '84) had light blue violet standards and medium violet falls. Evening Pond (Sindt '85) was a deep violet. Quirk (A. Brown '72) had bright yellow standards and pale yellow falls overlaid with wine veining. This one had interesting open form. Spanish Coins (Witt '76) is a vivid yellow self. Bumblebee Deelite (Norricks '86) had yellow standards and dark maroon falls. This one was good at home and a hit in Oklahoma City. I still like the oldies. Snow Fiddler (Dunbar '72) is a beautiful white with deep navy blue lines on the falls. Carolyn Rose (Dunbar '71) was a very pretty white with rose markings. I started out to collect a few MTBs but keep adding as I see new ones that I cannot resist.

Border Bearded irises are the most difficult, of the medians, for me to grow. I love Am I Blue (Denney '77) but after buying it four times and losing each of them without a bloom I give up. Pink Bubbles (Hager '80) is such a beautiful pink but a reluctant grower for me. It did bloom last year. I hope that is a good omen. Maybe it likes weird weather. Fiddler (Stahly '84) was a deep red. Drum Solo (Stahly '80) is a near black colored iris that is doing ok. Kirsch (Burch '84) was a pleasing dark red. Frills (Roe '76) is a frilly deep yellow and an excellent grower. Brown Lasso (Buckles-Niswonger '75) has rich butterscotch standards and light violet falls with a bright brown edge on the petals. Once it got settled in our climate it does fine yearly. Prediction (Keppel '82) has pinkish standards and off white falls banded pinkish. Shenanigan (Keppel '85) had salmon pink standards and falls heavily washed carmen. Both of these plicatas do very fine for me.

Ten or fifteen years ago only a handful of southern Ontario iris growers were growing small irises. We took them, as table iris, to our auctions and their popularity has grown. Several members are now supplying small iris for the sales. Many people head for the tables of dwarfs and medians before looking at the TBs. This is certainly progress!

MEDIANS IN NEW ZEALAND

When I was asked to write about Medians in New Zealand, I thought it would be very hard to tell much of interest. There are very few people hybridizing and those that are doing so, are doing their work in a very small way. One needs to remember that we are always sometime behind with modern medians because it takes time to import the newer medians and dwarf irises. Once we get them over here, they have to acclimatize themselves.

It then occurred to me that it may be of interest to hear how some of those imports have stood the test of time and are still garden favourites. Apart from those imported by our very few commercial growers, we have had some very good friends among American hybridizers. For some years after our Dwarf and Median Section was formed in the 1960s, Alta Brown sent us many of her introductions and I know many of those early ones as well as some of the later ones. Such as Indian Jewel, Ruckus, Roustabout, Profiteer and Barnstormer are still flourishing around our country.

The late Earl Roberts sent several parcels of his small species and hybrids. Very few of the species survived as there are not many parts of New Zealand where the climate is suitable. I do know that some of his hybrids such as Blue Beret do well in some of the colder areas. In the last few years, a number of American hybridizers and growers have been extremely generous in sending us extra iris and a lot of their own new introductions. This was a terrific help at times when we were being hassled by our harsh import restrictions and adverse currency rates. A good percentage of these have grown well and have been distributed to many parts of the country. Good reports are coming in now of some of these. It often takes at least three years for an import to settle in and start to increase well.

It is a great pity the New Zealanders don't take a greater interest in hybridizing as the locally bred ones definitely show the advantage they have over the ones that have had to suffer the trauma of a complete change of hemisphere. One interesting point I would like to make is that when I was importing, I found that with all bearded iris except perhaps MDBs, it paid to have them sent by sea. The long sea trip, often up to three months, forces them into dormancy. They often arrive looking quite dead. But soak them overnight in a bucket of water with a little liquid fertilizer added and they will shoot away instantly and make good increase. Whereas, the ones that are air freighted and planted just a few weeks after digging very often rush into flower and bloom out. I have to thank Melba Hamblen for that hint when I used to import TBs from her. I found it worked equally well with medians.

I sold my commercial garden about 18 months ago and moved to a smaller garden. I had to make the very difficult choice of which of the 1,500 varieties I couldn't bear to part with. I restricted myself to 20 TBs but was able to be much more liberal with dwarfs and medians.

I have used MDBs for edging one large bed and SDBs edging two large borders where I have a mixture of perennials, roses and peonies. So far, they are doing very well, infact, one small bed around a tall weeping rose has increased so rapidly that they are invading the lawn. The ones I chose for this bed are OPEN SKY, JAN REAGAN, WISHFUL THOUGHT, BIBURY, ANA (a greenish white bred by Frances Love, N. Z.) and two of my own, LILAC CUSHION and SEA HOLLY (a lavender-grey blend with bright blue beards). Most of those have rebloomed several times since they started in early October.

I have several favourites growing around the base of the sundial. These include SAPPHIRE JEWEL, NANCY ALINE and AZURE GEM, the last I think would be one that I would vote for it if by some unlikely change it was decided to give the Dykes Medal to a SDB. But then why not? BIBURY won it in England! The most floriferous ones in the bed were SUN DOLL, PALE STAR, ORANGE TIGER, RAINMAKER, COURT MAGICIAN, MICHAEL PAUL, RASPBERRY POP, BLUE PUFF and SILKIE DIP. Some of my favourite old ones were BANBURY RUFFLES, BOO, BLUE POOLS, COTTON BLOSSOM, and KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS.

Another group are N. Z. bred which include ELECTRIC GIRL, pale blue with white beards; LIANNE, pale apricot and PEACH TOP, a rather fragile looking pale pink that belies its name by standing up to all but the harshest weather. All of these were bred by the late Lucy Delany, who apart from Jean Stevens, was possibly the best know New Zealand hybridizer. Before she died, she had hundreds of seedlings that were well on the way in her search for a blue bearded pink SDB. The tragic part of the story is that hardly any were saved before a property developer with bulldozers moved in. One small area contains all Australian ones, two of Barry Blyth's early intermediates, BISCADOR and SHADOW MIST, both lovely subtle colours not seen in any other iris. Plus some bred by the next generations. JAZZAMATAZZ bred by Heidi Blyth aged 10, a very bright ruffled ruby and lemon bi-colour and FAIRY FOOTSTEPS bred by Tim aged 12, a pretty light blue and white plicata. Then to finish off a few of my own, HONEY POT, a low growing and long blooming iris; MAGIC RAY, a cream with chartreuse ray pattern and AMBER TIPS, a regular rebloomer.

I think that IBs are probably my favourites. They don't take too much space and being taller than dwarfs, they show themselves off from a distance. They have a terrific number of bloom stalks for the small area they cover. As yet, I haven't been able to plant many, but I have farmed a number of favourites out with a friend and when I have more beds prepared, I'll bring them home. Some of the ones I have chosen are: AZ AP, RARE EDITION, HOT FUDGE, AVENELLE, SNOW GNOME, THEDA CLARK, HELLCAT and RASPBERRY BLUSH as well as a few older ones that I have always liked: JUNE PROM, VOILA, ARABI TREASURE and BROWN DOLL.

Up until a few years ago, there were very few BBs and MTBs grown here but quite a few have been imported during this time and although neither class appeal to me very much, I have found a few that I must have in my garden: Three Border Bearded: CHICKASAW SUE, PINK BUBBLES, and AM I BLUE.

So far only one MTB can be found in my garden. DOTTED DOLL is the neatest, cutest little iris I've ever seen. Last year I did add a number of newer MTBs, but as yet, none have bloomed. "Happiness is a well filled garden, total happiness is always having one more space to fill."

I think that both the MTB and BB classes will become increasingly popular in New Zealand gardens as they are not so prone to wind damage as the very tall and heavier TBs.

The last of the median classes, the aril-medians, have always had a special place in my garden. I have always loved and have tried unsuccessfully for years to grow pure arils so as I could do more hybridizing. Thus, I have had to be content with $\frac{1}{2}$ and an odd $\frac{1}{4}$ that has survived, which of course means that I haven't been able to get many seedlings that had sufficient aril characteristics to please me. There are a few places in New Zealand where pure arils will grow beautifully, but a lot of our country is too close to the sea and the climate too humid.

Interest in Medians is definitely on the upward trend here. The membership of our Dwarf Section and Median Section has doubled in the last few years that I have been editing our twice yearly newsletter. Over the last 10 years, we have held very successful two day meetings during the median bloom. These are known as Dwarf Safaris and held in a different area each year. Last year, it was held in this district and was the first time our new trophy, the Lucy Delany Memorial Plaque was competed for. It is awarded to the best New Zealand bred median seen at the Safari and this is to be decided by a Senior Judge. It is a small porcelain tile framed and beautifully hand painted with a flower and bud of *I. pumila* Nana, which is as true to colour and form as I think possible. We visit gardens during the day and have an evening with a learning programme of talks, slides, question and answer sessions and judging instructions. We hope that it will eventually get more people interested in breeding medians.

I think one reason why more hybridizing is not done here is that in most gardens they find it hard to accommodate the seedlings. For some reason, New Zealanders very seldom specialize in any one genus. Their interest will run to two or three types of lovely flowers that they specialize in, and grow in that particular area. Hence, we have lovely colourful gardens all the year round and no room for seedlings.

1989 SDB INTRODUCTIONS

BROM BONES (Sdlg. 84-B-2) 12" M & RE (October) (Demence X Third Charm)
Dark violet bitone, darker fall spots. Cream anthers distinguish it from Third Charm. It has produced a stalk each fall since germination. \$7.50

DILEMMA (Sdlg. 81-1) 12" E-M (Twice Blessed X ?) Light blue standards and falls with standards being a bit lighter. Bronze dotted cream hafts separated from clear blue pattern and color. EC '86. Strong grower, fertile both ways. \$7.50

1986 introductions: Catamount & Crowninshield \$3.50 each.

John H. Burton II, 188 Sagamore St., S. Hamilton, MA 01982

THE NEW ZEALAND IRIS SOCIETY INC

In the time available I have tried to do what I can for the Medianite. The Dwarf and Median Section of this Society has carried out some research and has supplied the following information.

There are two general points that I would mention first:

1. There is some evidence that Irises raised in this country tend to be better doers than some raised overseas.
2. Because of the time needed to import new clones and then to establish them in this country, iris growers in New Zealand are five to ten years behind American growers in buying new releases.

Firstly a look at the popular buys from a local nursery. These tend to be more modern than the favourites reported by Groups in the next paragraph. In order of sales numbers:

- Lianne, SDB, a New Zealand introduction 1972
- Sea Holly, SDB, a New Zealand introduction 1982
- Pink Bubbles, BB, Hager, 1979. Pinks are popular.
- Inner Circle, BB, Ghio, 1976
- Tabita, SDB, Blyth (Australia) 1984
- Wyuna Evening, Aril med., New Zealand introduction 1987
- Barnstormer, SDB, Alta Brown, 1974
- Berry Parfait, IB, Warburton, 1969
- New Year, SDB, a New Zealand introduction 1984
- Biscador, IB, Blyth, 1973.

It will be noted that New Zealand introductions score highly. It will also be noted that no MTBs feature. There are very few of these available here..

Reports from Groups show that favourites tend to retain their position against newer introductions. Quality is not always seen as of principle importance - a reliable second rate bloomer is obviously valued. I place Rocket Flame (68) and Snow Cherries (68) in this category. It is noticeable too that form may take second place to garden value. For instance Starry Eyed and Gingerbread Man have obvious faults but are excellent garden plants in this country and are consequently very popular.

There has recently occurred a hiccup with imports from Australia with the Australian Agricultural authorities reportedly declining to provide the endorsed phytosanitary certificate specified by the New Zealand authorities. It is too early to say what effect this will have on Australian imports in the long run and this Society will be discussing the situation with the authorities.

Popular plants reported are:

BORDER BEARDED:

Pink Bubbles, Hager, 79. Chosen for form and colour.
Picayune, Keppel, 74. In my view the newer introductions from Picayune blood, available last year for the first time will become more popular.
Winter's Charm, Danielson, 74.

INTERMEDIATE:

June Prom, Alta Brown, 68, and without doubt the most popular median iris in this country. Good form and appealing colour.

Oriental Baby, 63, but reliable, has good increase and attractive colour.

Raspberry Blush, Hamblyn, 75, chosen for colour.

Mountain Red, Weiler, 73, colour and substance.

Pharoah's Daughter, Boushay, 73, form and popular colour (pink).

Florizel, An excellent yellow and brown plicata raised in this country, Catton, 78.

Rocket Flame: 68, a faithful performer.

Sing Again, 65.

Pixie Skies, Hamblyn, 66.

Snow Cherries, 68, grows like a weed.

Cheers, Hager, 74.

Oklahoma Bandit

Shampoo, 75. Very popular but widely reported as taking two years to settle down.

SDB Gingerbread Man, 68. The beard gets people, and it thrives here.

Sea Holly, Catton, 82, another local introduction chosen for colour.

Dragon Baby, Blyth, 76, chosen for colour.

Kentucky Blue Grass, Bennet Jones, 70.

Delicate Air, 61, colour and form

Melon Honey, Roberts, 72, unusual colour

Knotty Pine, 59, for reliability.

A few late comments that I pass on as received:

From John Vickers, Rangitikei Group:

Popular median iris in our Group are Lucy's Blue Silk, Raspberry Bonnet, Subtlety, Gingerbread Man, Kentucky Blue Grass, Sapphire Gem, June Prom, Sea Holly, Royal Fairy, Stormy Eyes, Open Skies, Little Puff, Little Swinger.

From Nelson Group:
Lucy's Blue Silk
Electric Girl
Surprise Orange, all three New Zealand bred.

Pale Cloud, Mandarin Jewel, Betty Wood

These few are those which flower well or survive a certain amount of neglect.

And from a Nelson nursery: (Alison Nicoll)

As well as those that grow easily and flower profusely such as Banbury Ruffles, Cherry Garden, Lianne, Cherry Lavender, Tonya etc, I also love the harder to grow and shy flowering like the tiny Aril Night Light, and also Toe Dance, Little Witch, and I just love Indian Jewel. The new ones like Raspberry Blush are just lovely.

All intermediates grow and flower well for me but the border iris is (sic) much slower at multiplying and the much sought after MTB are quite variable. Doing well one season and regressing the next. There is no time to wait for other reports, if any.

Regards,



Paul Richardson,
Secretary,
78 Thackeray St.,
Upper Hutt,
New Zealand.

ATTENTION SHOW CHAIRMEN: Please be sure to send Editor Nichols a copy of your early iris show reports. Be sure to include comments about weather conditions in your area during the 1989 bloom season. If at all possible, please list the Best Specimen of Show "Queen's Court" too.

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ROBINERY

INTERMEDIATE BEARDED ROBIN # 1

Carl Boswell: Here is a list of IBs that I found to be fertile: Honey Glazed, Marmalade Skies, and Golden Muffin all give amoenas, blends and bitones and there are many IBs when crossed with IBs, BBs and SDBs. Alien is a good parent crossed with TB, BBs and some IBs giving browns, tans, bitones and some with spots. Butterfly Boy crossed with blue or white TBs or BBs all had flowers 3" to 3½" from blue amoenas to blue toned whites. Butter Pecan crossed to pink and orange BBs or TBs gave some IBs most of which were BBs. All had the look of Butter Pecan in different tones. Heavenly Brotherhood I used to shorten some of my seedlings that were too tall and the flowers are smaller too. The color did not change on many of them which was good. I have also used Snow Festival and Palmer #74 to do this too.

Larry Harder: Some of the newest IBs that I grow and liked last spring were Baby Blue Marine, Hero, Maui Moonlight, Snowcone and Little Sunrise. Carolina Charmer was very nice in Hooker Nichols's garden last spring.

Lucy Burton: One of our nicest new ones was Sunshine Boy. It had a nice stalk on a first year plant. It was spectacular on the established clump in Barbara Schmieder's muster garden. Some of the favorite IBs in other gardens were Maui Moonlight (yellow); Night Shift (dark purple); Love's Tune (white with blue beards; Morning Show (red); and H. Nichols's seedling 8663A (a white self with horns).

Terry Varner: This year's IBs, as a whole, which bloomed were quite good. Especially outstanding were Cheers, Saranap, Honey Glazed, Hills of Lafayette, Little Trudy, Good and True, Moss Bay, Ask Alma, and Confrontation. I found the following IBs fertile and have seeds planted: Ask Alma, Honey Glazed, Confrontation, Progenitor, Little Trudy, Moss Bay and Saranap.

Paula Budinger: IBs which have set pods for me were Bright Ruffles and Little Saint. IBs which were looking good in Lankow's garden last year were Helen Proctor, Spring Dancer, Ask Alma, Little Snow Lemon, Magna and Sundown Red.

Evelyn Jones: Of the IBs I hope to see bloom this spring, there are many red bearded oranges and yellows. All will be from our own selected seedlings. Many SDBs and small TBs selected for IB work.

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