

THE

REBLOOMING IRIS RECORDER

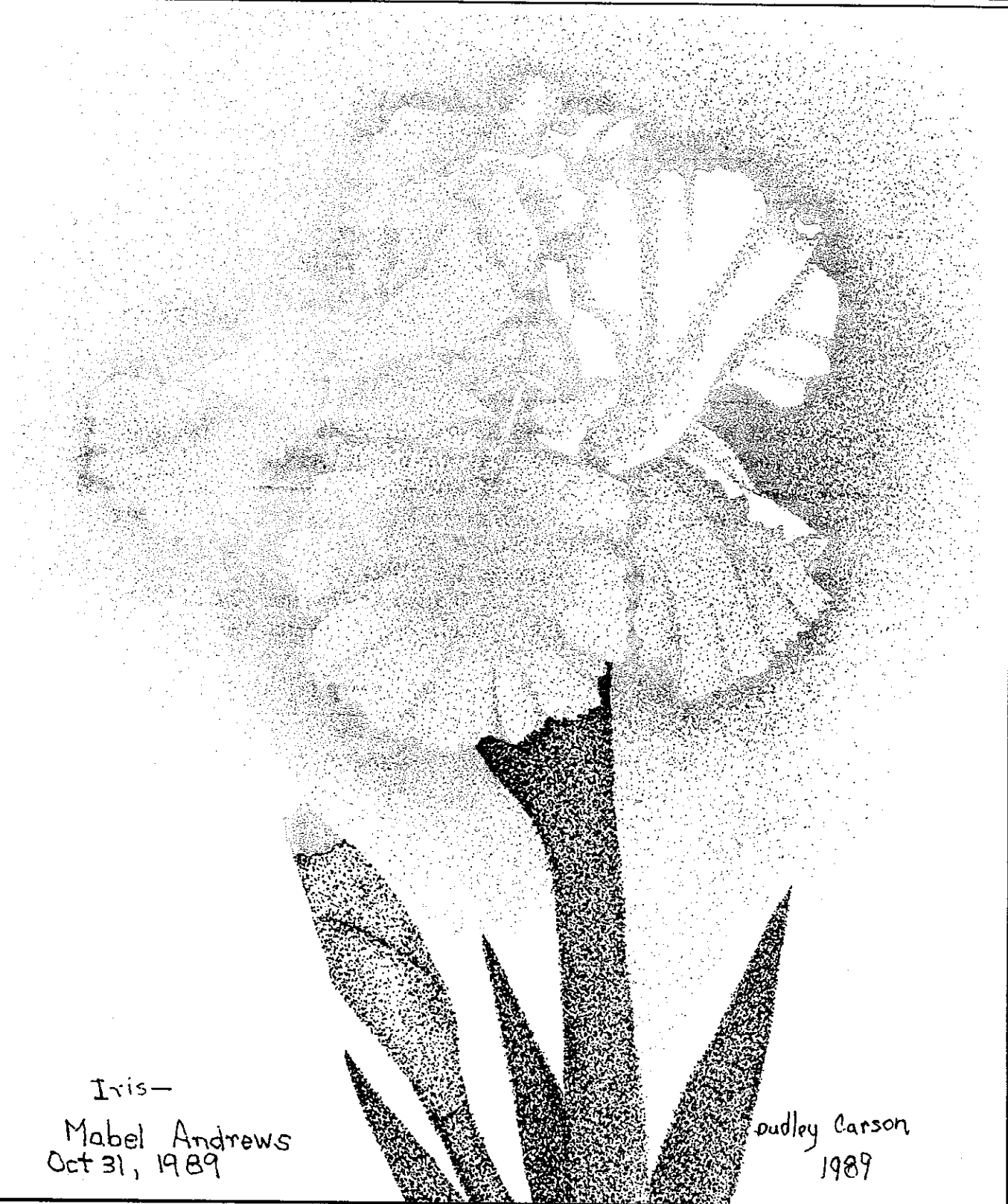
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Iris—
Mabel Andrews
Oct 31, 1989

Dudley Carson
1989



REBLOOMING IRIS SOCIETY

A Section of the American Iris Society

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Historian: Larry Harder, 208 First St., Ponca, NE 68870 Tel: (402) 755-2615
Membership: Howard L. Brookins, N75 W14257 N. Pt. Dr, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051 Tel: (see above)
Editor: Mike Lowe, 12219 Zilles Rd., Blackstone, VA 23824 Tel: (804) 265-8198
Assistant Ed., Art & Design: Dudley Carson, P.O. Box 556, Willamina, OR 97396 Tel: (503) 876-6463
Past President: Mrs. Virginia Mathews, 315 S. Grandview Ct., Stillwater, OK 74074 Tel: (405) 377-0696

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If you publish a catalog listing reblooming iris be sure to check the offer listed on page 15 of this issue. Help fanciers obtain a source for remontants and give your business a boost!

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Photographs are NOT banned in the Reblooming Iris Society!

This issue marks a rather dubious milestone. It contains the fourth consecutive Chesapeake & Potomac Fall Show report that has run without pictures. Would someone with a camera who attends the C & P Fall show in 1991 PLEASE take some pictures for the Recorder!

On the subject of photographs: *The Recorder* will run Black & White, Polaroids®, color prints, slides or any other format going. You may have noticed some pictures in this and previous issues that look 'different.' When a photo is received that is too dark to reproduce by conventional means (tip: shoot one f stop lighter than normal if the picture or slide is to be printed) the too-dark photo is digitized and enhanced by computer image processing. Drawback: even though it rescues an otherwise unusable picture, the printed result looks like that on page 6 and 17. If you can live with the 'spottiness' it makes available many good photos that are otherwise too dark to reproduce or that have to be 'lifted' from an old publication.

President's Message



These are exhilarating times for those interested in The Reblooming Iris Society and in the irises which it promotes. Activity centered around remontant irises is proliferating almost explosively in this country and notices of awaken-

ing interest are coming from other parts of the world. A few activities to cite follow.

Region 13 will stage a garden visit this autumn in Yakima, Washington to view reblooming irises in conjunction with their regular fall meeting. Until recently only a few cultivars had been identified which would remont in climates of Oregon and Washington. That list has grown to well over one hundred cultivars known to rebloom just during the past two years.

In Lincoln, Nebraska, the Lincoln Iris Society is planning to stage a public display of cut stem specimens of remontant irises in early October, 1991. This will be the first such display ever for Region 21. Last spring at the national convention of AIS in Omaha/Lincoln, Nebraska remontant guest irises were in full bloom for garden visitors in a separate bed at the Ensminger's garden in Lincoln with an indication of which cultivars had remonted the preceding autumn.

Sales on both east and west coasts to benefit the RIS are detailed in an article elsewhere in this issue and have raised considerable money to help keep membership fees at a reasonable level allowing us to develop better service for the membership.

Thanks to the generosity of two members, Jack Durrance of Denver, Colorado and Charlie Brown of Denison, Texas we were able to purchase at a very modest cost to the society a full page color ad in the July, 1990 AIS Bulletin. Membership increase resulting from that ad is very gratifying and has fully justified the expense.

We are experiencing a huge increase in mem-

bership and have been gaining momentum for more than three years. Our roster has increased from about 200 to more than 900 in that time with the most rapid growth during the past year. Inevitably, we lose a few at renewal times in January and June in spite of our efforts but net gain has been growing steadily.

During the past year we have discovered that our remontant irises are enjoying popularity and that the irises do rebloom in other countries. We have known for years that there is interest in remontants in England but have been surprised by correspondents writing of remontant Iris performance in Netherlands, France, Germany and Switzerland as well as New Zealand and British Columbia, Canada not previously reported. Some of these reports are contained elsewhere in a new column in this issue featuring international news. All these activities bode well for our society and point to an extended period of rapid growth for interest both in remontant irises of all kinds and in the society.

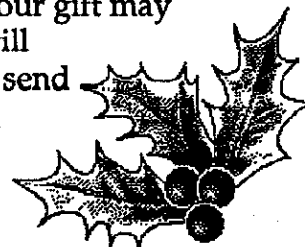
John Weiler



Give a gift that occurs more than once a year!

- A membership in the Reblooming Iris Society does several things...
- ❁ Gives pleasure, information and stimulation throughout the year;
 - ❁ Spreads the word about rebloomers;
 - ❁ Rescues you from the blahs of giving a tie or a bottle of cologne one more year;
 - ❁ And, no small thing, swells the ranks of the true believers!

Membership information is on page one. Don't worry that the recipient of your gift may already be a member. We will extend the membership and send a gift card suitably inscribed with either initial or extension membership and name of the giver.



Forcing Reblooming Iris as a Potted Plant

E. Jay Holcomb Penn State Univ.

Bearded iris are very showy perennial flowering plants, and they might have potential as an interesting flowering potted plant for florist or mass market sales. For example the iris could be flowered for Easter or Mother's Day then once the plant had finished flowering in the home, the plants could be planted to the garden for flowering in future years. The tall bearded iris are naturally tall and would be too tall for potted plant culture. The standard dwarf bearded iris would be the correct height naturally. So this type of iris seems the most appropriate to grow as a potted plant. There is little information about forcing iris as potted plants so an experiment was begun to determine how iris could be forced into flower in the greenhouse.

Dr. John Weiler provided thirty iris rhizomes of the following cultivars: **Jewel Baby**, **Willow Mist**, **Blitz**, **Plum Wine**, and **Baby Blessed**.

Iris rhizomes were received and one-half of each cultivar were potted immediately and moved to the greenhouse. The remainder were potted and placed in a 40° F. cooler for 6 weeks. After the 6 weeks of chilling the plants were moved to the greenhouse. In the greenhouse the plants were subjected to either short days where the plants were covered at 16:30 with blackcloth and the blackcloth was removed at 08:00 hours. A second treatment was that the plants were subjected to night break incandescent light from 22:00 to 02:00 hours each day. This had the effect of producing a long day effect. The third treatment was where the plants were subjected to

high intensity discharge lighting (HID) from high pressure sodium lamps. These lamps were on from 19:00 to 07:00 hours at an irradiance level of 55 $\mu\text{moles}/\text{m}^2/\text{sec}$.

At the time of flowering data were taken and the data are presented in the following table. It is important to note that no data are presented for **Plum Wine** and **Baby Blessed** because no plants flowered during the time that they were maintained under the treatments.

Although the plant numbers are small, there are some trends that are important to note. **Jewel Baby** did not flower under short days, and **Blitz** only flowered under short days after 6 weeks of chilling. These trends are the same as we have found with SDB iris that are not rebloomers. The fact that **Willow Mist** only flowered under short days can not be explained. I think that it will be necessary to have more than 1 or 2 flowering stalks per pot to make a good showy flowering plant. In general the height was good although there were a few plants that flowered so early that the stalks did not have time to elongate before flowering. The number of days the plants stayed in flower was fairly short so in the future it will be necessary to find cultivars that last longer or can be treated to last longer.

There is no explanation for the lack of flowering with **Plum Wine** and **Baby Blessed**. Since the plants had been just potted, that may be a partial explanation for the lack of flowering.

In summary, the first year for the reblooming iris provides some trends but more work will have to be done before solid recommendations about out of season flowering can be made.

The Effect of Chilling Time and Photoperiod on the Flowering of Reblooming Iris

	Jewel Baby			Willow Mist			Blitz			
	SD	LD	HID	SD	LD	HID	SD	LD	HID	
no chilling	-	37	39	42	-	-	-	-	52	} Number of Days to Flowering
6 weeks @ 40° F.	-	33	29	35	27	-	43	38	39	
no chilling	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	1.5	} Number of Flowering Stalks
6 weeks @ 40° F.	-	1	2	1	2	-	1.5	1.5	1.5	
no chilling	-	1.5	2.0	1.0	-	-	-	-	2	} Number of flowers per stalk
6 weeks @ 40° F.	-	2	1.5	2	2.5	-	2	2.5	2	
no chilling	-	2	8.5	4	-	-	-	-	8	} Length of flower stalk (inches)
6 weeks @ 40° F.	-	5.5	6.5	5.5	6.5	-	6.5	8.5	9	
no chilling	-	6	5	5	-	-	-	-	6	} Number of days the plant stayed in flower
6 weeks @ 40° F.	-	7	8	5	8	-	6	9	9	

Legend: 'SD' = Short Day lighting
'LD' = Long Day lighting
'HID' = High Intensity Discharge lighting

Great Events In Iris History

R. Smith

Critical choices and critical events alter the histories of individuals, societies and nations. The murder of the Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand ignited Europe and started World War I. Both history and mythology are replete with similar examples. When William Mohr developed the tetraploid **Purissima** which Clara Rees crossed with the hardy, ruffled lavender diploid **Thais** and produced the beautiful tetraploid **Snow Flurry**, she made possible the change in form, size, and beauty of white irises. Similarly, when Paul Cook crossed the 48 chromosome intermediate hybrid **Progenitor** with **Shining Waters**, he realized that he had transferred the dominant amoena pattern to the tetraploids and it required just a couple more crosses to produce **Melodrama** and then the Dykes Medalist **Whole Cloth**. Many similar important events and choices can be identified.

This article concerns another cross that, because of its double effect on modern irises, seems worthy of being similarly included as an event that changed the course of iris history. In an article in the AIS Bulletin for Jan. 1971, Jim Gibson writes, "After several years of hybridizing I finally got a seedling that seemed to be good enough to start my line. The cross was **Tiffany** and **Mme. Louis Aureau**... It was a proven rebloomer, and I named it **Gibson Girl**... One must conclude this plant has done as much for the improvement of the plicata as **Snow Flurry** has for the contemporary blues, whites and other colors."

Gibson Girl was recognized as long as 30 years ago when Larry Gault wrote, "...**Gibson Girl** which in turn is the foundation of Jim's present plicatas such as **Taholah**, **Copper Halo**, and **My Honeycomb**." (*Bulletin*, Oct. 1960). In a national Rebloomer Iris survey conducted that year, rebloomer irises were voted in four categories: Reliability, Flower, Parent, Resistance. Respondents listed **Gibson Girl** in all four! (*AIS Bulletin*, Oct. 1961)

Two questions can be asked:

1. Is Jim Gibson qualified to place **Gibson**

Girl in a class with the legendary **Snow Flurry** and

2. Is there any evidence to support the opinions expressed in the rebloomer survey?

As to the first, James Gibson graduated from Oregon State University and took graduate work at the U. of California and at General Motors Technical Institute. For 57 years he taught at Porterville, CA High School and Porterville Evening College. He is internationally recognized as the leading hybridizer of plicatas and his name follows literally dozens of HM and AM awards listed in the 55 pages of the 1979 *Check List*. He was awarded the AIS Hybridizer's medal in 1965, the Premio Firenze award in the Italian sponsored international competition both in 1965 and 1978 and the American Dykes Medal in 1976. To

further evaluate the extent of the Gibson influence it might be informative to follow the national ratings of a couple of his introductions. **Kilt Lilt** was registered in 1969 and **Going My Way** in 1971. **Kilt Lilt** was second on the TB Judges' Choice list in 1971, and first in 1972, winning the Walther Cup. That same year it was 15th in the Popularity Poll. In 1975 it was first in the Award of Merit voting and 8th in the Popularity Poll. In 1974 it was 6th in the PP, 3rd in 1975, 2nd in '76, '77, and '78, and 4th in 1979.

Going My Way first appeared in the 1975 Popularity Poll as 41st, was 21st in '76, 17th in '77, 8th in '78, and 7th in 1979.

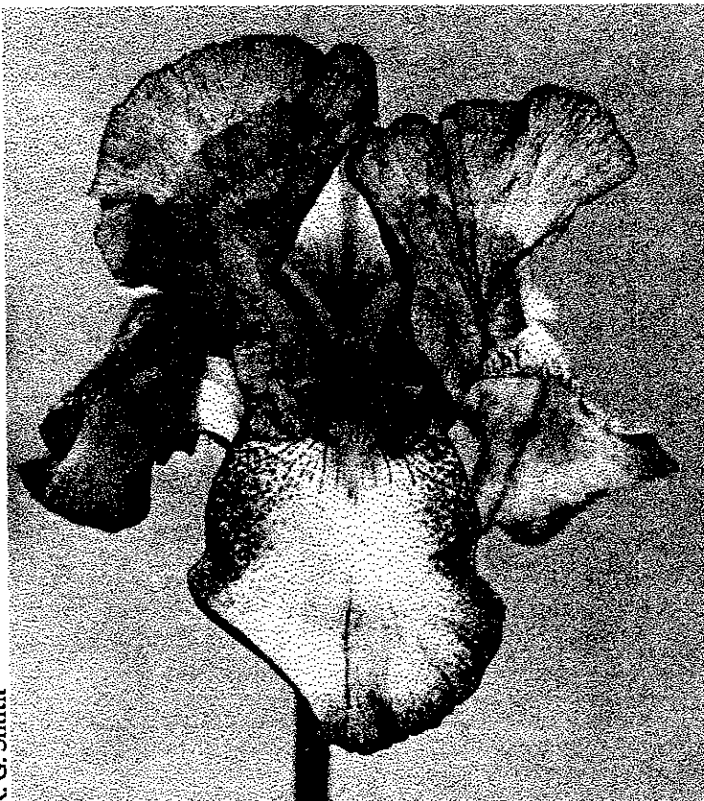
The ratings of these two irises for the decade of the 80's were as follows: 1980, '81, and '82 – both in the top 6; '83 in the top 9; '84 in the top 13; '85 in 16; '86 in 15; '87 and '88 in 20; '89 in 23, and 1990 in the top 21. In sum, **Kilt Lilt** has consistently been rated among the favorite irises in the United States for the past 18 years, and **Going My Way** for the past 15. Of course there were other Gibson irises listed also in the favorite 100 of irisarians. Few hybridizers can match this record. No one has produced a greater number of outstanding plicatas. Rebloomer hybridizers, however, are more interested in **Gibson Girl** than in its descendants and Dykes medalist **Kilt Lilt**. In December 1966 I visited Jim Gibson's two gardens, the home garden where the named varieties were growing and the vacant lot garden



THE LADY

where the seedlings were lined out. Probably much to Jim's amusement I went down the rows of seedlings, palpating the base of each fan and could feel the flower bud starting in about a third of them. This explains why so many of Jim's originations rebloom. Another personal experience supplies anecdotal evidence of the blooming persistence of **Gibson Girl**. In the late 1950's I was annually growing several thousand seedlings in the quest for rebloom and was rotating plots with seedlings one year and grasses and grains the next to plow under as a green manure crop. One year I plowed up and planted soya beans in a plot that had grown named varieties. Ordinarily the fertilizer crop choked out any stray rhizomes, but while inspecting this plot one midsummer day I found a single iris stalk in bloom, struggling valiantly among the much taller beans. **Gibson Girl** was unique in that it had survived the plowing (which a number of sorts could do) but also had managed to bloom. Like all rebloomer irises that will bloom any time a rhizome has sufficiently matured, **Gibson Girl** lost size, substance, and quality if not transplanted regularly, but when well grown is,

R. G. Smith



THE IRIS

after 45 years, still a respectable flower. It inherited the hardiness of its Sass Midwest parent, although about half of its progeny were winter tender, presumably because of the other side of its pedigree.

What was its ancestry? The Sass parent was **Tiffany**, famous parent in its own right and awarded an AM in 1943. The other parent was **Mme. Louis Aureau**, a French Dykes medal winner (1934) and a product of the famous french hybridizer, Ferdinand Cayeux. **Gibson Girl** was registered by J. Gibson in 1946.

A cursory examination of some recent rebloomer ancestry yields ample evidence of the influence of **Gibson Girl** on rebloomers. The two Zurbrigg pedigrees published in the *Reblooming*

Iris Recorder, 1989, Vol. 34 show that one parent of **Immortality** has at least two **Gibson Girl** in its background. The other parent has three. Lloyd's pedigree for the amoena **Q127 "Butter"** has at least seven crosses to **Gibson Girl** behind one parent, and five for the other! His **Perfume Counter** and **Violet Supreme** both had **Gibson Girl** as one grandparent. **Violet Classic**, **Violet Miracle** and **Jolly Goliath** all have **Gibson Girl** in their backgrounds. Each of Horace Wright's three early rebloomer introductions had **Gibson Girl** as one parent.

Schortman's famous old rebloomer **Memphis Lass** had **Gibson Girl** as one grandparent, as did Frank Foster's **Midnight Pacific**. Frank's **Fever** had it as a great grandparent. R. Smith's **Replicata** and **Purple Duet** were both directly from **Gibson Girl**. His **Autumn Elegance**, **Autumn Chameleon**, **G. Percy Brown**, **Cloud Duet**, **Moonlight Duet** and **Fall Festival** all had **Gibson Girl** as one grandparent. Hybridizers now using any of these cultivars are perpetuating the influence of **Gibson Girl**. It is capable of transmitting rebloom to the

first and to subsequent generations. If I had to nominate but one iris as the progenitor most influential in the development of the modern reblooming iris, it would be the California product of James Gibson. Consequently, because of its role in the development of a great line of plicatas, as well as that of major source of modern rebloom it seems that **Gibson Girl** does indeed belong to that select class of unique and important events in the development of the modern iris.

Speaking of portentous choices, the first iri-sarians, Adam and Eve (surely they grew some irises) made a poor decision and consequently the lease on their garden was not renewed. ❖

Why Not Rebloomers?

Mike Lowe

“Why not rebloomers? Why take up space with irises that bloom only three weeks once a year? Why? Why? Why?”

I get many responses to these questions, the commonest of which are:

“I didn’t know about rebloomers.”

“I don’t know where to get them.”

“The major catalogs don’t carry them so they can’t be any good.”

“They’re just plain ugly—Dogs, Dogs, Dogs!”

I would like to address a few words to these complaints.

To the full-blown iris hobbyist, I will concede that many of the rebloomers have old-fashioned flower form. This is evident by comparison with the trendy new once-bloomers when *both are viewed during spring bloom*. However, go to the garden in the crushing heat of mid July or August and cut a stalk of an everbloomer produced by Jones, Carson, Hager, Zurbrigg, Smith, Hall, Weiler or Miller. Nice, right? Right! *Now* compare it to the new introductions from mainstream hybridizers. In most parts of the country, if you manage any comparison at all, it will have to be with a live bloom versus a picture. The less developed form wins hands down on one telling criterion—it is *there!* Blooming in your garden, beset by heat, drought, bugs, rot, and all the other ills of the summer season—it wins simply by blooming.

Whether you use this everbloomer in a flower arrangement in your home, take it to church, the Bingo Hall, a bridge club meeting, or the Hunt Club Bar-B-Que—or display it in any setting where it will be seen by the average flower lover—the reaction is uniformly the same. Do they hold their noses and exclaim *“Oooo nasty—look at that old iris form!”*? Of course not. The comments I hear are *“Beautiful! How did you do that? I didn’t know iris bloom now!”* Closely followed by: *“I want some of those!”* and *“Where can I get them?”*

We iris fanciers have willingly traveled a path that has concentrated on flower size, shape, and color. Many of us believe that concentration on flower alone has carried us too far down the road of extreme specialization. We have become somewhat insular, divorcing ourselves from the mainstream of decorative plant development. The vision of producing an iris plant that can happily live in a perennial border has been forgotten.

The current interest in, acceptance of, and desire for rebloomers offers iris hybridizers an opportunity to take a new direction and gives them a graceful way out of a cul-de-sac. Merely combine the hardy, vigorous, dependable, disease resistant plants of the ‘old guard’ rebloomers with the ultra modern ‘West Coast’ flower form. Easy to say; a simple concept; a snap—the execution will tumble the next Dykes Medal into your lap. Well, yes... Wonderland is just around the corner.

These goals, however, are possible and achieving them will propel iris to a starring role in perennial gardens of the future. Let’s not kid ourselves—iris are not now mainstream garden plants. Only staunch iris nuts will put up with brief, once a year bloom and all the work attendant upon making that glorious month happen. Rebloom—everbloom, if you will—is both achievable and desirable. The possibilities this presents for acceptance by average gardeners, in utilization for landscaping (private and public), and for commercial sales is only now being realized. There is a growing excitement and a feeling that we are on the threshold of several major breakthroughs. This sense of excitement can be found throughout the iris community—from brand new pollen daubers through average iris fanciers to the giants of commercial enterprise. Climb on the bandwagon and share in the thrill of the ride!

I had a dream...

The month is July—the year is 2001. I am in a K-Mart® store. There are enormous boxes of iris rhizomes on display and the sign over them reads:

**Plant these now!
Double your money back
if they don’t bloom
next spring
and summer—
and fall!!**

We are fortunate to be smitten by one of the most beautiful flowers there is. If only the bloom season lasted longer! Achievement of that dream may be closer than you think.

Meet the Man From **BRIG**

John Weiler

The British Remontant Iris Group, BRIG, has a new president whose name is well known to readers of Iris literature in the U.S. as co-author of a widely read book, *Growing Irises*, G.E. Cassidy and S. Linnegar. Sidney Linnegar is also Show Secretary of the British Iris Society. With such credentials, it was no surprise to meet him as one judge of the International Competition for Irises in Florence, Italy this past May. Conversations between the judges revealed Mr. Linne-



gar's interest in remontants. How refreshing to know that remontancy is becoming so important to those growing irises, not only in the U.S. but also in England and much of western Europe! Those from abroad with an interest in remont-

John Weiler

ant irises should be known to RIS members. That is the purpose of this writing.

Sidney is thorough as a judge, and his attention to irises in the garden reveals much of his personality and approach to life. In Florence he worked in the gardens almost daily, studying and evaluating iris traits thoroughly before voting. Long after others had gone from the garden he was there—studying and looking at cultivars still being grown from earlier annual competitions dating back to the 1950's. He also found time to photograph all the winning varieties available for each year of competition since the late 1950's. His enthusiasm for both irises and people is contagious. Furthermore, to engage him in conversation about irises often leads to insight for types of iris knowledge not generally followed closely here in the U.S. He knew that irises other than bearded types rebloom; he also knew of our desire to have information about any irises which remont, prompting him upon

his return to England, to send information on remontant *I. laevigata* clones gleaned from literature as well as from his personal experience at Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, stretching back to the 1960's. Enthusiasm, attention to detail, and a friendly manner are his hallmarks. He sends his greetings to members of The Reblooming Iris Society.

For those who may be interested, the cultivars of which he writes that are reported to rebloom in *A Pictorial Book on I. laevigata* by Akira Horinaka as currently available (at least in Japan) are *Shikizaki*, violet flower blooming both spring and fall; *Shikinoyosooi*, a large violet flower reblooming three to four times a year; *Shirayukihime*, a white which reblooms. Other *I. laevigata* clones which have rebloomed at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, are *I. laevigata Variegata* with foliage variegated green and white and *I. laevigata var. alba*, a double white which is also called *Snowdrift*.

I have serious reservations in labeling an introduction 'RE' if only a few rhizomes in a clump send up stalks. With a true rebloomer, nearly every

mature rhizome will send up a full stalk.

A well-known hybridizer—Name withheld to protect the guilty.

In the next 5 pages you will find a 'HOW TO' on rebloomers. A bit of background is in order...

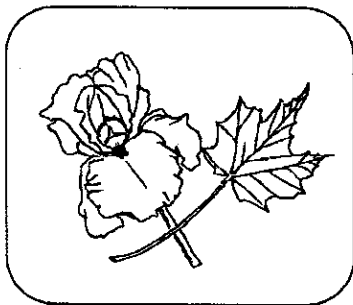
This past summer I received a request from a Chapter President for a package of instructional material to be used at a fall meeting featuring reblooming iris. I confidently said, "Our bulletin, *The Recorder*, is crammed with interesting, informative, basic instructional material. I'll just xerox a batch and get it right off to you!"

WRONG!!!

Search as I would, no suitable articles could be found in *Recorder* back issues. I pulled from the files an excellent handout on basics (I am embarrassed to say I do not know who authored it), poured in some graphics, corrected a word or two and Voilá, the result is in the next few pages. Feel free to copy, hand out, reproduce, reprint, republish—whatever will be of value to you or your organization. Editor



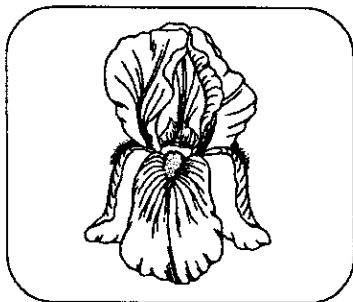
Reblooming Iris Information



Welcome to the wonderful world of reblooming iris! For those of you who haven't before paid much attention to the "rebloomers" or are new to iris, there are a few things about them

that you should know to avoid possible disappointments. The following discussion is mainly directed to the TBs (Tall Bearded iris) but also pertains to the median and dwarf bearded rebloomers. Although there are rebloomers among other classes of iris such as the Siberians, Japanese, Arils, etc., their culture and habits are different than the TBs.

Rebloomers have been around for a long time, but until recently their popularity has been limited, because some characteristics such as larger flowers, ruffles, etc., were more easily developed in the once-blooming varieties. The rebloomers were not able to compete with the oncurs in flower shows. It was an arduous task merely to get the rebloom characteristic firmly established in iris. It was even more difficult to get the rebloom characteristic coupled with the



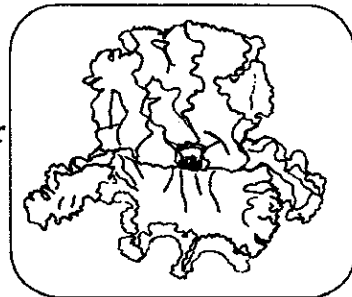
more glamorous characteristics. However, there were people who were interested in having and in breeding iris that would flower more than once during the year even if the bloom

was not quite as spectacular as the once-blooming types. Persistent efforts by a few hybridizers gradually produced rebloomers with improved flower form.

A great number of the older rebloomers, although not quite up to the modern once-bloomers on the show bench, are nevertheless very beautiful, rivaled by few other kinds of flowers. As this is being written, in a somewhat more mild than normal late fall, there can be seen out the window about 35 different varieties flowering (out of 78 rebloomers) while all the other kinds of flowers save one are gone.

In the past few years, the pace of quality remontant introductions has greatly accelerated. We now have rebloomers that are winning prizes in competition with the oncurs. Others are presently being tested for introduction, and more will certainly be here soon. We even have some reblooming space agers (they have various appendages from the beards).

For someone interested in color in the garden who particularly likes iris, the question, 'why settle for only three weeks of bloom in the spring when two to four months are available'—goes begging for an answer.



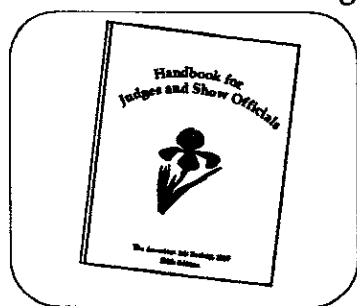
The mechanisms which cause and/or prevent bloom from occurring at certain times of the year in TBs are not fully understood. Obviously, there is a difference between oncurs and rebloomers. The rebloomers are generally more vigorous growers and mature new rhizome growth more rapidly. The accelerated growth cycle sometimes seems to place certain varieties in some locations out of synchronism with the seasons. Occasionally these will start putting up late bloom stalks that get frozen and will not yet have other rhizomes that are mature enough to flower in the spring. This however, is a small price to pay for the glorious rebloom that we get from the others that do rebloom consistently.

One of the first things to be aware of is that rebloomers do not produce a grand finale with all varieties flowering nearly at the same time as they did in the spring. The rebloom is scattered, depending on variety, anywhere from a few weeks after the last spring-only bloomers until quite late when cold or freezing weather shuts them down. The majority of varieties have their rebloom in mid and late fall. Most have their own preferential time of rebloom each year under normal conditions. Abnormal weather and the type of care they have had during the previous 6-12 months may cause variation. There are those varieties that seem to have no rhyme or reason as to when, from year to year, they will rebloom. Others start reblooming in summer or early fall and continue sending up occasional bloom stalks until overtaken by a freeze.

Some rebloom quite late, and these varieties will not perform in short season areas. Almost anything with a tendency to rebloom, will, in the

central and southern California coastal areas, but only relatively few will rebloom in the far northern and high altitude shorter season parts of the country. Most reblooming varieties lie somewhere between these extremes. As one moves to longer growing season areas the number of varieties that will rebloom increases.

The number of frost-free days (from the average last day of frost in the spring to the average first frost in the fall) is a good guide to your relative length of growing season, but not perfect. There are some long frost-free-period areas that have extended stretches of very hot weather which tend to slow the growth or cause dormancy in some varieties.



This effectively reduces the length of the growing season for those varieties in such locations. (Insufficient water can have the same effect.)

The A.I.S. Judges'

Handbook classifies rebloomers into four types:

1. Continuous, like those last mentioned.
2. Cycle bloomers, which have their rebloom time fairly well defined.
3. Sporadic, which are the ones that may rebloom any time.
4. Repeaters, which give a second bloom within a few weeks after their spring flowering.

In long season areas some so-called repeaters may give additional stalks in the fall.

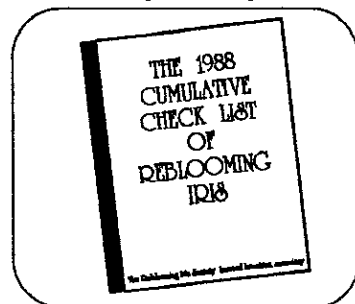
These categories may hold fairly well in the medium and shorter season areas but seem to break down somewhat in the long season areas. Like the repeaters that can give a third bloom, some of the earlier cyclical can also give additional bloom, making them appear to act more like continuous bloomers.

The best way to choose varieties that will rebloom in your area is to try to find from people close-by or from those with similar climates varieties they have that rebloom well. Varieties that have been hybridized in your area as noted in the Check List are another good bet. Suppliers who specialize in rebloomers can usually make good recommendations. Also, the 1988 *Cumulative Check List of Reblooming Iris* has notations on many varieties as to where they have been observed to rebloom.

For those who have not used this resource, the Check List is an alphabetical listing that shows hybridizer, year introduced, where intro-

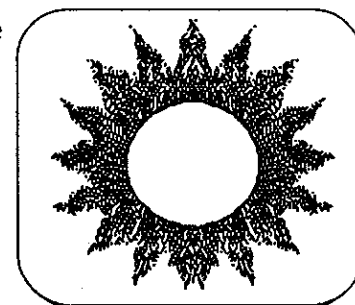
duced, a color description of the flower, and other information for each reblooming variety. It is valuable to have and currently lists 1428 varieties. It is now out of print, however an updated version will soon be available from our secretary, who at the time of this writing (1990) is Howard L. Brookins, N75 W14257

N. Pt. Rd., Menomonee Falls, WI 53051.



The remontants vary widely in their ability to rebloom. There are a few that will rebloom whatever, and some that will need a lot of coaxing, with the remainder falling all degrees between. The safe way to get dependable rebloom is to provide the best growing possible conditions. Ideally, they should be planted in a place where iris have not been grown for a few years. Compost and the proper fertilizer should be mixed into the soil and additional smaller amounts of fertilizer added as a side-dressing a couple of times during the season and in the spring just before new growth begins. They should be replanted in a new area when divided. Other kinds of flowers can be put where they were. Then, the next time they are lifted and separated, they can be planted back in the original spot, but the longer the period (up to three or four years) before using the same location for iris, the better. This crop rotation principle is very helpful and applies with a vengeance in some soils. However, space limitations often make it impossible to rotate areas. The next best thing is to mix generous amounts of compost into the soil when replanting, in addition to fertilizer. Good compost replenishes some of the used-up micro-nutrients needed by the iris and also facilitates availability to the plants of existing soil minerals.

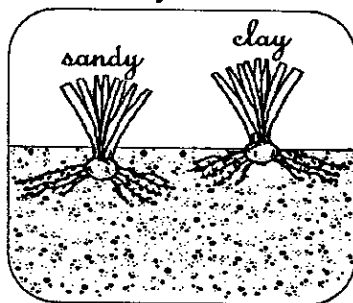
Once-only bloomers should be placed where they get at least half a day's direct sunlight. Rebloomers should get more than that if possible. Although rebloomers do require that certain conditions be met to achieve maximum re-



bloom, they and oncens are among the easiest of perennials to grow. In many locations they have little, if any, insect or disease problems. All classes

of iris have problems in some areas. Because these vary according to location, the best way to obtain information on possible problems is to talk to someone in your area with reblooming iris experience. *The World Of Iris*, a sourcebook published by the AIS, has an excellent section devoted to identification and treating of pests and diseases that can affect iris. Everyone truly interested in iris should have this book. It is available through the Sales Items section of the AIS Bulletin.

Iris should not be planted too deeply or they will rot, or at best take a couple of years to flower. In sandy soil the rhizome can be covered with

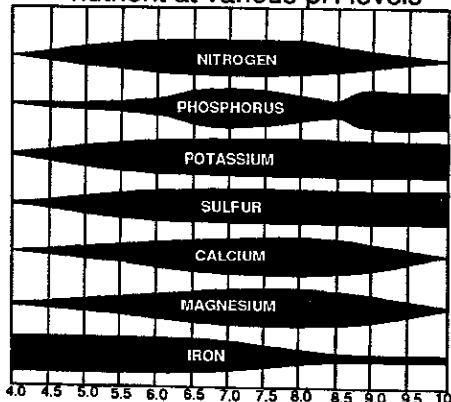


up to two inches of soil. In heavy clay the rhizome should be slightly exposed, or in sun belt areas covered just enough to prevent sunburn. In other types of soil, planting depths should fall between these extremes

depending on how close to either sand or clay the soil is.

One of the nice things about TBs is that they will grow in almost any type of soil as long as it is well drained. Very sandy soil needs generous amounts of fertilizer and compost to supply nutrients and frequent watering because of its poor water holding ability. The compost also helps to increase water holding ability. At the other extreme, plantings of TBs in heavy clay need extra care in providing good drainage, for they cannot tolerate wet feet for extended periods. Also clayey soils tend to pack tightly, excluding air and making root penetration difficult. Gypsum helps loosen clay. Rebloomers in this kind of soil are best grown by moving them every two years so

Width of bands indicates the relative availability of each plant nutrient at various pH levels



that the soil can be loosened. Soil should be dug or rototilled to a depth of 10 inches—8 will do, but 10 inches is better.

Almost all TBs will do well in a soil that has a pH ranging from neutral to slightly acid (7.0

to 6.5). Some varieties will do well in a more acid soil. Lime should be used to bring soils more acid than pH 6.5 up to a minimum of 6.5 unless you know that your varieties thrive on the acid side. Likewise, a pH of more than 7.0 should be brought down to a maximum of 7.0 with soil sulphur. If your soil is neutral, and you have one or two varieties that don't seem to do well—you know that they should be good growers and you have provided everything else—try putting them in a separate area where you have added soil sulphur to make it somewhat more acid.

As you know iris are heavy feeders. Rebloomers require even more feeding due to their generally more vigorous growth and the demands of maturing two or more sets of rhizomes each year. This means that they will need a special feeding program in order to produce top quality rebloom—unless they are grown in extremely fertile soil and moved to a new area each time they are separated. Iris in the best of soils will decline in vigor and quality of bloom if they are continuously grown in the same spot without supplemental feeding.

For average soils a balanced fertilizer (such as 10-10-10 or others where all three numbers are close) usually works well. Avoid high nitrogen mixes (such as for lawns) where the first number is larger than the other two. A local



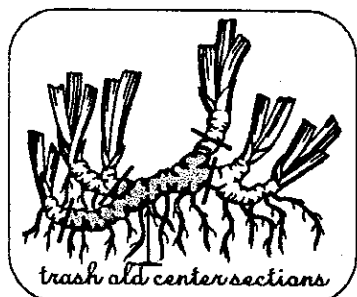
Farm Advisor or knowledgeable nurseryman can often tell you if the soils in your area are particularly lacking in one or more of the three main elements or any of the micro-elements and need special enrichment for the deficiency.

TBs in general don't need quite as much moisture as a lawn or most other garden plants, since some of their ancestors come from partially arid areas. Once-blooming iris can take moderate periods of drought in their growing season without suffering ill effects. However, most rebloomers must be kept growing all through the season in order to produce the energy needed to mature the extra set of rhizomes. Therefore, some provision should be made for supplemental watering of rebloomers during dry spells if you want dependable and abundant rebloom.

Because of the rebloomers' extra vigor, they will usually need dividing sooner than the oncers to prevent overcrowding. Overcrowding kills

rebloom. A few of the most vigorous ones may need dividing every year. Dividing time depends on the combination of variety, climate and culture. Occasionally you may get a situation whereby you will need to grow two clumps of a variety, dividing them in alternate years, in order to be assured of getting rebloom. Usually it will be two or three years before each clump needs to be divided. Rule of thumb: if the clump has exceeded 6 or 7 fans it is time to divide.

Clumps can be divided any time after spring flowering is completed up until three or four weeks before cold weather comes. Iris need these few weeks to get their root systems established before winter. Early dividing and replanting is usually best. The rhizomes can be held in a shady, dry, place for several weeks before replanting, but it is generally best to replant immediately. Some growers from more humid areas in the

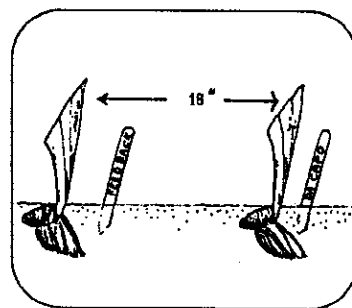


East report that it is advisable to hold large succulent rhizomes purchased from the west coast for a while to dry out before replanting. This will help prevent rot.

When dividing your own plants, keep only the new offsets of the rhizomes (usually two to four inches long) containing the fans (leaves). Throw away the older sections of rhizome unless they have healthy-looking increases and you wish to propagate as many of that variety as you can. The roots of the older sections are brown and obviously dead, but new roots will grow on the increases. The live roots on the new sections of rhizomes (increases) will usually have all the small radiating rootlets stripped from them and they will not be of much use except to anchor the rhizome in place. Extremely long roots can be shortened to make planting easier. New roots will grow.

Air pockets between roots and under the rhizome should be avoided. Roots can be spread over a mound in the center of a hole or straddled over a ridge centered in a ditch to reduce air pockets. Also fine soil can be poured over the rhizome while jiggling it

to fill in the air spaces. Plants should be spaced 18 or more inches apart to prevent root competition between adjacent clumps. If an immediate clump effect is desired they can be planted closer together but will certainly need to be separated after the first year to prevent overcrowding.



Perhaps the preceding discussion makes it sound like growing reblooming iris is tricky or complicated. It is not. Although the iris do require a certain amount of preparation and care, these are easy to provide, once you understand what they are. This discussion has been aimed toward getting the maximum amount of rebloom possible. Compromising on some points won't ruin all. You just might not get as much rebloom.

In summary: Pick a sunny, well drained area where iris have not grown for a year or two. Loosen the soil to a depth of 10 inches and mix into it some compost and a handful of balanced fertilizer for each rhizome. In very sandy areas rhizomes should be covered with no more than two inches of soil. In heavy clay they should just barely be covered. Planting depths in other soils should be proportionately between these two extremes. Fertilize lightly twice during the summer and again just before growth starts in the spring. They do not need quite as much moisture as lawns but should not be allowed to go without water in dry periods. After the clump has grown to more than 6 or 7 fans, they should be dug up and divided. Plant the biggest and most healthy looking rhizomes in a new location. When these need dividing they can be put back into the original areas again. That is all, and you should be rewarded with a bounty of beautiful flowers.

If you do not have anyone who can recommend varieties that will rebloom in your area there is a list of some of the suppliers who specialize in reblooming iris at the end of this article. They can usually recommend varieties for your area. Send for their catalogs. If you ask, most of them will send you a suitable collection on the order of \$15 to \$25 or whatever more you would like, and you will probably get far greater value than if you order by individually selected varieties. If you do not belong to the A.I.S. and are interested in learning more about iris you

should join. It is a large well-organized group divided into 24 regions of the USA and Canada and also has many foreign members. It publishes four quarterly bulletins of about 100 pages each, that deal with all aspects of iris. The 24 individual regions each have their own publications, elected officers, meetings, and flower shows. Also, there are also Sections one can join such as Reblooming, Dwarf, Median, Historical, Siberian, Japanese, Louisiana, Species, Pacific Coast native, and Cooperating Society-Aril. These also have their own publications.



Membership in AIS costs \$9.50 individually or \$11.50 for a family, annually. Write to AIS Membership Secretary, Marilyn Harlow, P.O. Box 8455, San Jose CA 95155

Membership in the Reblooming Iris Society costs \$4.00 per year.

Write to Howard Brookins, N75 W14257 N. Pt. Rd., Menomonee Falls, WI, 53051.

Some suppliers specializing in Reblooming Iris:

Amberway Gardens - 5803 Amberway Dr., St. Louis, MO 63128

50¢ or stamps for catalog

Garden of The Enchanted Rainbow - Rt. 4 Box 439B Killen, AL 35645

\$1.00 for catalog, refundable

Halls' Flower Garden 1495 Enterprise Rd., West Alexandria, OH 45381

Catalog on request

The Iris Pond - 7311 Churchill Dr., McLean, VA 22101

\$1.00 for list

Moonshine Gardens - P. O. Box 367, Potter Valley, CA 96469

Free catalog

Nicholls Gardens - 4724 Angus Dr., Gainesville, VA 22065

\$1.00 for catalog, refundable

Rialto Gardens - 1146 W. Rialto, Fresno, CA 93705

List on request

Membership Secretary's Report

A review of the past year's membership payments by month:

Month	Total	New Members	Renewals	Payments
October '89	44	31	13	\$265.50
November '89	39	13	26	\$256.50
December '89	32	12	20	\$383.80
January '90	35	10	25	\$407.00
February '90	50	28	22	\$332.30
March '90	34	13	21	\$263.50
April '90	9	6	3	\$51.50
May '90	37	26	11	\$289.00
June '90	34	16	18	\$253.00
July '90	68	46	22	\$389.00
August '90	95	57	38	\$766.50
September '90	50	22	28	\$435.00
TOTALS:	527	280	247	\$4,092.60

This equates to:

280 Welcome Letters to new members.

247 Postcards to members who renewed.

248 Postcards to members past due.

Unfortunately, 99 of the 248 members mailed Reminder cards have not renewed up to this date.

REMINDER: IF YOU MOVE, SEND IN A CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY OR EDITOR.

The Post Office DOES NOT forward bulk mail, but DESTROYS all but the ADDRESS PAGE, which is returned to the Society FOR A FEE OF \$.30 or more. We can not afford to mail you a second copy (printing costs average \$1.25 per copy) and pay \$1.05 postage for First Class mail. Our greatest problem in this field seems to be with Life memberships. Many are retired, and move around a great deal. Some of our life members haven't received a copy for the past two years because of constant moves!

Howard Brookins

IN MEMORIAM

Ben Azer MI

Ruth Braun VA

Martha Cope MD A. T. McCarron TX

Betty Paul CA C. C. Rockwell, Jr. TX

Horace Wright OH

Region 4 Fall Iris Show

The Region 4 Fall Iris Show was held in Virginia Beach, Virginia on October 6, 1990. This show is a popular part of the Fall Regional Meeting which is traditionally held the first weekend in October. The unusually mild weather and no killing frost enabled 9 exhibitors to enter 46 stalks representing TBs, BBs, IBs, SDBs and seedlings. Judges for the show were David Walsh, Ruth Walker, and Freda Hazzard.

The Best Specimen of Show was **Harvest of Memories** entered by Clarence Mahan (McLean, VA). A collection of **Autumn Orangelite** was a

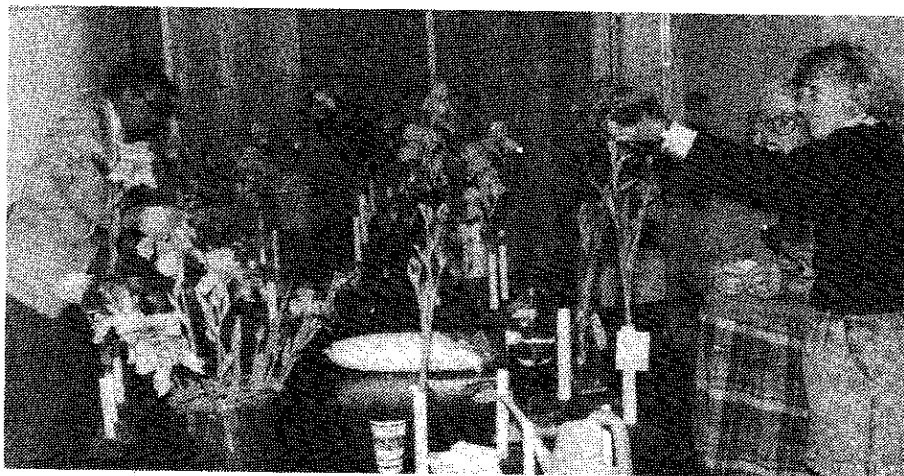
FALL IRIS SHOWS		
Silver Medal	Queens of Show	Bronze Medal
Diana Nicholls	Harvest of Memories	Lloyd Zurbrigg
Diana Nicholls	Grape Adventure	Dick Spurling

crowd pleaser. The Best Seedling award went to Jane McKnew (Pasadena, Maryland) for her large black-purple tall bearded I-2. Diana Nicholls (Gainesville, VA) won the Silver Medal; Lloyd

Zurbrigg (Durham, NC) was awarded the Bronze Medal.

Frances Thrash, Show Chairman

Mike Lowe



ABOVE: LLOYD ZURBRIGG, ROSALIE FIGGE, AND CAROL WARNER PREPARE ENTRIES AT REGION 4 SHOW — BELOW: OPEN TO THE CROWD

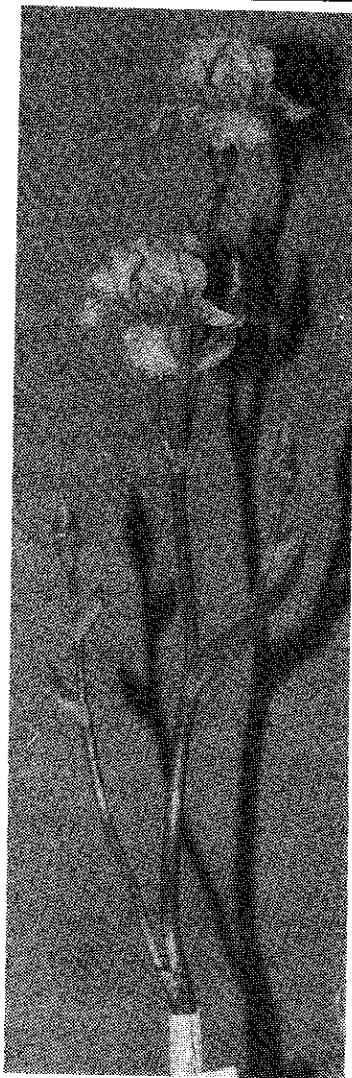


Mike Lowe

The Great Fall Show

Chesapeake and Potomac moved the Annual Reblooming Iris show to the U.S. Botanical Garden this year and of course it was a beautiful day—no wind, no rain or snow (This show has traditionally been held outdoors.) The visiting public (from all over the US) showed great interest in the specimens exhibited. "I didn't know iris bloomed at this time of year. What hot house did you force them

Mike Lowe



REGION 4's QUEEN OF SHOW,
HARVEST OF MEMORIES

in?" "Why don't mine rebloom?" The session was indeed educational to say the least.

Dick Sparling exhibited the Queen of Show, Frank Jones' **Grape Adventure**. He also took home the AIS Bronze Medal. Diana Nicholls showed the first and second runnersup, **Lady Emma** by Frank Jones and **Youth Dew** by Lloyd Zurbrigg. She also walked away with the AIS Silver medal for the most blue ribbons. Best seedling in the show was the almost perpetual winner, Clem Reeves' F 65-3, a lavender Miniature Dwarf Bearded with a garden name of Clem's Cutie.

Reprinted from C & P Newsletter

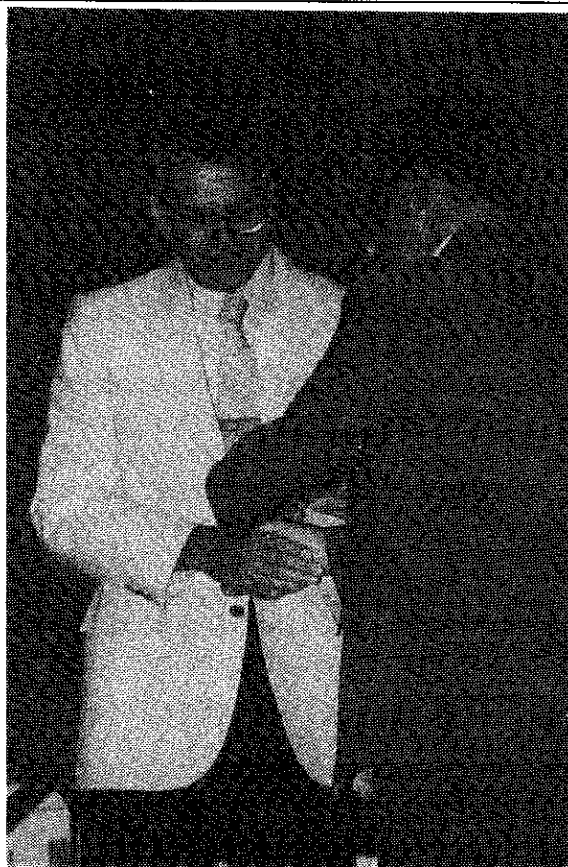
Notice to sellers of reblooming iris

We receive many requests for sources of reblooming iris, particularly from new members when they join, and as a result of an article on reblooming iris in the October, 1990 *Southern Living Magazine*. As Secretary, I feel it unfair to determine WHO to recommend to these people, as I know many members sell commercially, some on a small scale, and my greatest worry is MISSING someone if I develop a list.

Effective January 1, 1991, I am going to send all new members, and those who write for information, a printed list of Commercial Sources. On this list, I will include ALL ADVERTISERS in the 1990 issues of *The Reblooming Iris Recorder*, and any others who will pay a \$5.00 fee to cover printing costs of the list. This gives everyone an equal chance to be recommended as a source. You will know the person requesting your catalog or list is a serious rebloom enthusiast, and not just looking for something for nothing! If there is a FEE for your catalog, send that information when you sign up. *Send information and \$5.00 check made out to R.I.S. to: Howard L. Brookins, N75 W14257 North Point Dr., Menomonee Falls, WI 53051-4325*

DEADLINE for the 1991 list: February 1, 1991

Also available to commercial gardens are mailing labels for our members, for a fee of \$10.00, or FREE for an ad in YOUR CATALOG to join the Reblooming Iris Society, listing the membership rates, and the Membership Secretary's address. If you're a smaller grower, selling in a limited area, write me for information on receiving labels for a specific area or part of the country.



Mike Lowe

ABOVE—LLOYD ZURBRIGG, ON THE LEFT, ACCEPTS THE COOK-DOUGLAS MEDAL FOR BABY BLESSED



RIGHT—THE MEDAL



Report of the Nominating Committee

The nominating committee presents this slate of officers for election in spring, 1991:

President – Howard Brookins

Secretary – Charlie Brown

Western Regional Director – Bill Maryott

These people have been contacted and have agreed to serve if elected.

Earl Hall, Chairman

Bill Maryott

Virginia Matthews

Reblooming Irises Winning AIS Awards, 1990

DYKES MEMORIAL MEDAL

Jesse's Song TB (B. Williamson) CA
runnersup

Az Ap IB (A. Enslinger) CA, TX
Sky Hooks TB (M. Osborne) CA,
B.C. Canada, Germany

KNOWLTON MEDAL (BB) runnerup

Music Box Dancer (E. Roderick) CA

AWARD OF MERIT

Tall Bearded

Edith Wolford (B. Hager) CA
Breakers (Schreiner's)
AZ, CA, CO, CT, MN, NJ, OR, UT, WA, OR
Latin Hideaway (H. Nichols) CA
Immortality (Zurbrigg) AL, CA, IA, IL, KS, KY, MA,
MD, MO, NE, NJ, OH, OK, OR, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI,
B.C. Canada, England, France, Netherlands,
Switzerland
Navajo Jewel (Weiler) CA
Wild Jasmine (B. Hamner) CA

Border Bearded

Boy O Boy (J. Ghio) CA
runnerup
Nursery School (J. Ghio) CA

Standard Dwarf Bearded

Sun Doll (B. Jones) CA, KS, OK, OR, TX, WA
Pippi Longstockings (S. Innerst) CA

Siberian

runnerup
Indy (R. Hollingworth) IN

HONORABLE MENTION

Tall Bearded

Best Bet (Schreiner's) AZ, CA, CO, NE, OK, OR,
TX, UT, WA
Fringe Benefits (B. Hager) OR

Windsong West (H. Nichols) OK
Point Made (S. Innerst) CA
Raven Rock (F. Carr) CA
Esmeralda (J. Ghio) CA
Hot Streak (J. Ghio) CA
Circus Jewel (Albers/Nichols) TX
Memoirs (J. Ghio) CA, TX
Inaugural Ball (J. Ghio) CA

Border Bearded

Candyland (M. Byers) CA, TX, WA

Standard Dwarf Bearded

Balkana Baby (C. Boswell) CA
Car Hop (P. Black) CA, OK, WA
Smell The Roses (M. Byers) CA, NE, TX, UT,
VA, WA

Miniature Dwarf Bearded

Tiny Cherub (B. Hager) CA
Candy Fluff (L. Miller) CA

Siberian Irises

Charming Darlene (A. M. Miller) MI, VA
Mad Magenta (B. Warburton) MA
Lucky Lilac (C. McEwen) ME

Japanese Irises

Japanese Pinwheel (C. McEwen) ME

It should be noted that irises reported to rebloom may do so over wide areas of the U.S. and abroad. Some however, may remount in very specific climate types only. For that reason, states and other countries where rebloom has been reported to RIS are indicated following the name of each award winner.

data by John Weiler and Howard Brookins

A Tip o' the Hat
to
the Gibsons:
Jim, Dick,
and
'The Girl'





Seedling Reports

Karl and Carol Jensen

"Several seedlings rebloomed. A white one out of **Immortality** budded up too late to bloom and as it was its maiden bloom, we potted it up and it bloomed inside. Good form and substance but only 5 buds."

Jim Ennenga

At a pre-convention get together, we filled our stomachs with Ruth's delicious munchies and Jim's good wines, and we feasted our eyes on some stunning flowers in the remontant seedling patch. It was damp and cold but irisarians on the trail of something new are impervious to external climate conditions. Camera flashbulbs provided enough light to read tags and it appears that they also provided enough light to get pictures of a few of the loveliest blooms as we went from clump to clump in the dark and driz-



DAVE NISWONGER, JIM ENNENGA AND LLOYD ZURBRIGG EVALUATE SEEDLINGS

zle. It was an added plus that Jim was in the garden to talk about the crosses and to discuss the probability of remontancy with other reblooming hybridizers. Look for some of these out of Omaha in the next few years.

Lloyd Zurbrigg

"There are a few good orange crosses this time. **Moonlit** is a fine parent, and gives pinks, so I crossed it to **Orange Celebrity** and **Orange Honey**, and the latter two were crossed both ways successfully. **Borderline** gives lovely flowers in its seedlings, but I do not like its style of growth. Crossed to **Champagne Elegance**, it gave two wonderful yellow amoenas—real border size. but the whole cross looked stunted. Almost next door were 49 plants from **Baroque Prelude X Stunning**. These were superb in growth—and not a decent flower in the bunch! That is discouraging.

In the blue bearded lines, one of John Moffitt's proved to be a good parent. Its pollen parent was a seedling of mine from **Magic Memories X Key Lime**, but the yellow does not show through. Crossed with HH 23-6-2, it gave some really nice things, and 23-6-2 has a remontant pollen parent. Surely soon the break will come and we will have a good blue-bearded remontant. By the way, **Tell Tale** had the best blooms I have ever seen this year—big, wide, superlative blooms in smooth chartreuse, with those violet beards. If it would do that all the time, it would easily win the H.M. and even more.

...Of the 15 from the excellent cross of Earl Hall's remontant seedling X **Suky**, that were taken to Roanoke and established there in clumps, only four bloomed this spring. The best grower was also the first TB to open. It is a very wide and rounded oyster white. If it will rebloom, I shall introduce it and it is fertile both ways. There was a rather good plicata but it was almost put to shade by one that bloomed up in Radford. This latter one got the attention of all visitors to the garden! However it does not appear to have good growth. Also new on this cross in Radford was a novel near-amoenas—the standards had a hint of some feathering and this was heavier in the falls; form was excellent."

Raymond Smith

"...Enclosed is a picture of my best seedling of the fall.

R. G. Smith



It is not the bluest because there is some pink in its background, but it is 7 inches wide and 5 high, and the terminal bloom lasted a full seven days and two rains in the cool fall weather... If it really reblooms and is not just an occasional performer, it is the closest to a Dykes that I have ever had. I have two other blue seedlings that definitely are rebloomers which are related to it, but they are more the quality of **Victoria Falls** and lack the form and substance of this one. ...There was also one white that was truly outstanding, but it may be too late for anyplace north of here, or even here for that matter."

Frank Jones:

In almost every garden where it was guested in Omaha, J 82-35 attracted comment and attention. This butterscotch yellow with brown plicata markings is not only attractive in the spring, it blooms again in July and 're-reblooms' in September/October in Virginia. We have had this in our garden for 3 years; it is reliable in its remon-tancy and we really would like to see this one in-troduced.



J82-35 (F. JONES) ONE OF THE MOST RELIABLE REBLOOMERS I HAVE EVER GROWN — MBL

Frank now lives in a small valley about 6 miles south of Gallipolis, Ohio, across the river from Charleston and Huntington, WVA. There

are 4 ponds on the farm so there is plenty of water year round for his rebloomers.

Late note from Lloyd:

"Just have to exult a bit with my friends. I **Bless** has so far proven to be rather infertile, not so unusual for an IB. There were 10 seeds from it by pollen of **Marmalade Skies**. Only two germinated and these were planted rather late in June. Both are now coming into bloom!! Only the first is open. The stem is quite dwarfed, not surprising considering the age of the plant. But the flowers are truly something! The F. are circular, with a raised, waved edge. The color is a brilliant, deep yellow. The somewhat lighter S. are close together and addressed. The flower has been open 4 days! It is hard to tell what the typical branching may be, but I think we all have a real treasure trove of a remontant border iris or intermediate, whichever. It produced pollen on the third day. The two were dug and potted last Friday when I rushed up to Roanoke and back, hearing that there was to be a big freeze.

I brought back some two dozen stalks, including: **Starship**, (no appendages), **High Ho Silver** (great branching); **Winesap**, (rich red-wine color and smooth hafts, but narrow), **Buckwheat**, (not unlike **Spirit of Memphis**), which disappointed me as it was quite small in the flower. Of my own things, **Jennifer Rebecca**, (lovely single flower again), **Amanda Erin**, **Sunny Disposition** (V 95 Oct) a lovely light yellow with good branching.

Three of the cross **Matrix X Suky** rebloomed this fall. The first was the one I took to the show. Last week there were seven stalks on a white, JJ 93-1-4, that the Roanoke people liked a lot. Also in bloom is -4-4, a huge, very wide oyster with fancy plic marks in the F. I believe it was the one **Dick Sparling** [MD] said was in bloom for him. The form and substance are very impressive, but the coloring is not too great. There were also two or three seedlings of **Sunny Disposition**, attesting to the fact that it will be an excellent parent. All had the branching of **Harvest of Memories** rather than that of **Immortality**, but they had the size and form of the latter (good size and form). Well, I really wrote because of the bright, deep yellow bitone. I am sure you both will love it. It makes me all the more anxious to see the other **Marmalade Skies** seedlings next spring. They were crossed to talls, so they may not be quite as interesting, perhaps."

Mike Lowe

Clarence Mahan

Also seen in Omaha and in our own garden (Mike & Anne Lowe) was 85x9 which will be introduced in 1991 as **Violet Music**. This huge purple flowered beauty reblooms in October and November, but tends to be caught by frost here (VA). It is possibly the largest flower we have seen and has sufficient substance to sustain its size. Watch for this one.



Mike Lowe

EDITOR: I SHOULD HAVE INCLUDED A RULER IN THIS SHOT OF 85X9—THE SIZE MUST BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED

Monty Byers

The only space ager that we have seen rebloom here (VA) is E 77-100—white, lightly plicated lavender, its yellow beard ends in small white horns. We have not seen this iris bloom in the spring, and it was cut on October 27th (freeze warning) to open indoors, therefore our description may be a bit off, but it strongly resembles Earl of Essex. I fear it will rebloom too late for our area in a normal year.

Earl Hall's 86-144-5SC, is a warm creamy white flower with medium brown edging on the shoulders which gives the overall effect of a brown and white iris. This iris also has very wide falls and much ruffling. It is, however, another late one which will probably get frozen in rural areas but which may do well in the protected urban areas in Virginia.

Excerpts, Midwestern Regional Director's Report

The Lincoln (Nebraska) Iris Society had their annual sale and auction Saturday, July 28. For the first time ever we had a rebloomer table. Fortunately we have had good July rebloom so I exhibited stalks of **Coral Charmer** (Wright 83), **Belvi Cloud** (Jensen 58), **Ultra Echo** (Rich 72), **Eternal Bliss** (Byers 88) and **Winterland** (Byers 90) on the rebloomer table. You should have heard the questions and comments. "Rebloom? I never heard of such a thing!" "Do you grow them in a greenhouse?" "What kind of chemicals do you use?" Needless to say, we sold out long before the once-bloomers and could have sold 2-3 times as many rhizomes. We also signed up three new members for the Reblooming Iris Society. The Lincoln area members of the Reblooming Iris Society had a luncheon meeting during the sale. Items of business discussed were:

1. 1991 Fall Iris Show. The consensus of the members was that we should have a fall exhibition in 1991 rather than a full-scale show. The date will be October 5 and it will be the first fall display of reblooming irises in Region 21.
2. Reblooming record keeping. A proposed form for recording rebloom was discussed. It will be sent to the President of the Reblooming Iris Society for suggestions before being printed up.

The three year drought in Lincoln finally ended this month. The scorching first week in July was followed by mild weather with plenty of rain. That has meant lots of rebloom and lots of disease. Practically everything has leaf spot. We lost **Sun Doll** (B. Jones 86) to scorch and **Brown Duet** (R. G. Smith 71) to soft rot. The rebloom has been delightful. **Refined** (Weiler 87) rebloomed in early and mid July showing that its July bloom last year was no fluke. Besides the cultivars that were on display at the sale mentioned above, July rebloom has included **Now and Later** (Zurbrigg 77), **Soap Opera** (Ghio 82), and **Dawn of Fall** (Jensen 76). **Pepper Lane** (Jensen 76) and **Golden Encore** (F. Jones 73) will be blooming in early August and **Belvi Cloud** is sending up another stalk for August.

Dr. Garland Bare

The Importance of the Whale in the Field of Iris

*They would be difficult to tell apart, except
That one of them sails as a single body of flowing
Gray-violet and Purple-brown flashes of sun, in and out
Across the steady sky. And one of them brushes
Its ruffled flakes and wrinkled sepals constantly
Against the salt-smooth skin of the other as it swims past.
And one of them possesses a radiant indigo moment
Deep beneath its lidded crux into which the curious
Might stare.*

*In the early morning sun, however, both are equally
Colored and silently sung in orange. And both gather
And promote white prairie gulls which call
And circle and soar about them, diving occasionally
To nip the microscopic snails from their brows.
And both intuitively perceive the patterns
Of webs and courses, the identical blue-grass
Hairs of connective spiders and blood
Laced across their crystal skin.*

*If someone may assume the iris at midnight sways
And bends, attempting to focus the North star
Exactly at the blue-tinged center of its pale stem,
Then someone may also imagine how the whale rolls
And turns, straining to align inside its narrow eye
At midnight, the bright star-point of Polaris.
And doesn't the iris, by its memory of whale,*

*Straighten its bladed leaves like rows of baleen
Open in the sun? And doesn't the whale, rising
To the surface, breathe by the cupped space
Of the iris it remembers inside its breast?*

*If they hadn't been found naturally together,
Who could ever have thought to say: The lunge
Of the breaching whale is the fragile dream
Of the spring iris at dawn; the root of the iris
Is the whale's hard wish for careful hands finding
The earth on their own.*

*It is only by this juxtaposition we can know
That someone exceptional, in a moment of abandon,
Pressing fresh iris to his face in the dark,
Has taken the whale completely into his heart;
That someone of abandon, in an exceptional moment,
Sitting astride the whale's great sounding spine,
Has been taken down into the quiet heart
Of the iris; that someone imagining a field
Completely abandoned by iris and whale can then see
The absence of an exceptional backbone arching
In purple through dark flowers against the evening sky,
Can see how that union of certainty which only exists
By the heart within the whale within the flower rising
Within the breaching heart within the heart centered
Within the star-point of the field's only buoyant heart,
Is so clearly and tragically missing there.*

Pattiann Rogers

A Windfall for RIS! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Following the fund raising example set last year by Mike and Anne Lowe from irises donated by Frank Jones, three local Iris societies in the Central Valley of California cooperated to hold an Iris rhizome sale to benefit the Reblooming Iris Society. Thanks are due to members of Kings, Sequoia, and Fresno Iris Societies who held the sale on September 8 with plants donated by several individual members and by commercial growers of Sutton's Green Thumber, Porterville, CA, Moonshine Gardens, Potter Valley, CA, and Rialto Gardens, Fresno, CA.

Special thanks are due to Kings Iris Society for relinquishing the date and site of its annual sale on a one time basis to accommodate the benefit sale for RIS. A mountain of work to organize the sale was done by Evelyn Hayes, current Treasurer of RIS. Other than the donations from commercial gardens, many irises were donated by those having the largest private gardens: Delores Bates, Dorothy Dominici, Trudy Graber, Margaret McCraw and Philip and Lucile Smith. Approximately half of the donated plants were of remontant bearded irises. The remainder were mostly TB spring bloomers.

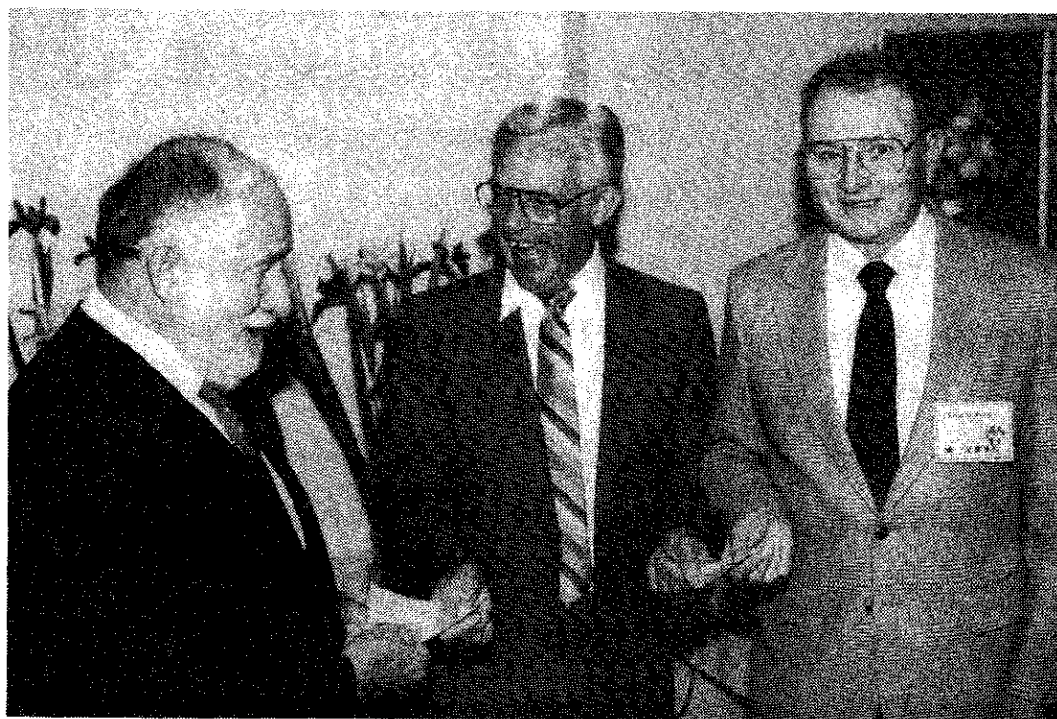
The public flocked to the remontants first. Only after the supply of rebloomers was

exhausted did the once-bloomers begin to sell. When the dust settled and scratches of buyers scrambling for remontants were bandaged, enough irises had been sold to pay for expenses of rented tables, ads purchased in local newspapers, printing of several information sheets on *How to Grow Irises*, those inviting the public to join AIS, RIS and local societies and yet yield a considerable profit. That profit, \$1,190.00 was donated entirely to The Reblooming Iris Society.

Although our treasury is adequate at the moment, membership fees have never adequately supported publication of *The Reblooming Iris Recorder* and mailing of dues notices so that outside funds have been needed. It is hoped that the examples set last year on the East Coast and this year on the West Coast will stimulate others elsewhere to sponsor such sales for benefit of RIS. Such added income allows us to maintain high quality and outstanding legibility in our publications. It will also allow us to monitor membership terms better, send notices, buy ads in other Section publications to encourage development of remontancy in all irises and a host of other services to benefit you, the members.

Help us help you. To those who have already done so, thank you, thank you, thank you.

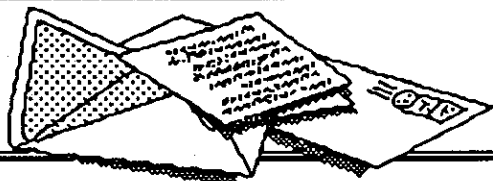
John Weiler



Mike Lowe

Thank You Redux

John Weiler accepts the \$izable checks mentioned in the *President's message* from; on the left, Jack Durrance and right, Charlie Brown. The donations largely financed the color recruiting ad in the October *Bulletin*. The advertising has returned more in increased membership than its cost. Now the challenge: We hooked 'em—lets keep 'em interest in rebloom!



Cards and Letters

March 11

...I am becoming quite excited about the Re-blooming irises. I ordered 12 last year to see how they do in Oklahoma. They survived our -8 degrees in December and are looking pretty good, but I need more information on how to take care of them to encourage rebloom.

Bob Thomason

Oklahoma City, OK



29 June

...**Gibson Girl** is not without problems. Its progeny must be very carefully selected as about half of them are rotters. Fortunately that weakness seems to disappear when second generation hardy plants are used. A second problem is the tendency for any plic to put loud hafts on any self progeny. My **Purple Duet** was one of the cleanest in that respect that I ever got but I never used it for breeding.

I now have a new project, i.e. to produce disease and insect resistant reblooming irises. I have a line of gold-tan siblings that nearly fill the bill, but that color becomes insipid against the brilliant fall colors of this climate. Percy Brown's plants were generally unusually strong, but one must also have a quality flower to go along.

12 November

...I just can't understand the foibles of certain plants. Most sorts thrived mightily with the ample feeding and heavy weekly rains. But my old **Replicata** didn't even grow any, and **Al Segno** didn't manage to get a bloomstalk up. On the other hand, **Summer Olympics** had four stalks per rhizome, each about the size of a rake handle and loaded with flowers with white streaks below the beards. (I don't know whether this is a white fall with mostly yellow overlay, or a yellow fall with a streak instead of a spot below the beard.) At any rate, the conclusion has to be that some rebloomers like much moisture but some will bloom and grow better with limited amounts. Zurbrigg's **Violet Classic** even got up stalks for the first time ever here, but

unfortunately too late to miss the hard freeze on Oct. 18th that ended the season.

Raymond Smith

Bloomington, Indiana



June 30

The garden here in Durham is nearing the full stage—I am digging the last few rows by hand and, since it is a very sandy loam, the work is not hard...perhaps I am destined to know something of what you know about growing iris in sandy soil. ...The new things this spring were mostly in the blue-bearded class or the Space-Agers. I am still hoping for remontants in these classes. ...Among the crosses here are several from **Harvest of Memories** with such yellows as **Idol's Dream**. Some of the other yellows I crossed with H of M are **Moon's delight**, **Saffron Flame**, and **Sarah's Laughter**. Most of these took both ways. Here's hoping the seedlings do not inherit too much of the tenderness. **Best Bet** is not proving to be much of a grower here, but the cross **Best Bet X Mother Earth** looks vigorous thus far.

...It was a bad year, but I seemed to fare excellently in comparison with other gardeners. However, of the 24 or so new things from Monty, only five bloomed. I loved **Godsend**; it is going to be a winner for sure. Its horns were almost non-existent, but the blue-violet is much more evident than in Niswonger's **Blue Chip Pink**. **Conjuration** also bloomed and I truly love it. It was a bit shorter and the flowers a good bit larger than it was in Memphis. **Thornbird** gave three stalks; I took one to Indiana where it was much admired.

August 7

...The **Harvest of Memories** seedlings are doing well, but the overall best must surely be those from **Moonlit**. That is a shock considering its pedigree, but I had known before from my own experience that it is an excellent parent, and does give some remontancy.

Lloyd Zurbrigg

Durham, North Carolina



17 July

Small Flash, SDB, rebloomed May 23rd and 28th; **Rare Edition**, IB, rebloomed May 23rd; **September Buttercup**, BB, in bloom now with 1 stalk, small branching and 6-8 buds.

14 September

Autumn Bugler, planted in August, in bloom

Sept. 7th and still in. Two SDBs, **Baby Blessed** and **Baby Tears** blooming too.

12 November

...**September Buttercup** has been a wonderful rebloomer in our yard. Her first blooms were in July, then she started to bloom on October 4th, and with 4 bloom stems has continuously bloomed until the last bloom dropped yesterday (Nov. 11th). **Baby Blessed**, **Immortality** and 3 planted in July—**Autumn Bugler**, **Lady Emma** and **Born Again**, have bloomed—one stalk each but more than I expected so soon. I still have blooms on **Born Again** and also on one suggestive of the coloring of **Theatre** whose name has been misplaced.

Betty Warrell

Williamsburg, Virginia



August 16

...A member of our Society has turned over to me a 1960 Lloyd Austin catalog which she has very carefully kept in a loose-leaf notebook—each page in plastic cover! Our GKCIS library decided to see if the Reblooming Society could use it. I see he even had a horned iris! I'll be happy to send it on intact if you are interested. Must add: I had a lady come by a couple of weeks ago—just had to have all the rebloomers I had available!

Millie Townsend

Independence, Missouri



August 26

Greetings from Idaho! I'm a new member of RIS—joined the first week in June.

...Do you need articles? I just met with Opal Brown (77 year old hybridizer) and had a great evening with her. I'd thought of writing a couple of paragraphs. Let me know.

Oz Reyna

Nampa, Idaho



14 September

...My Yesterday clumps also suffered from the drought this summer. Had only one bloom-stalk.

Have had three fall rebloomers—**Summer Charm**, **English Cottage**, and **Immortality**. Our weather is less than ideal for rebloomers.

Everette Lineberger

Inman, South Carolina

November 8

...Rebloomers have really been busy this late warm weather. We had about 20 stalks to take to our FSK fall luncheon.

Even old **Sangreal** has 2 bloomstalks—the first time ever in the fall.

Owings Robert

Westminster, MD



November 12

...The rebloom was good. TBs are still managing to open—blooms a bit translucent but still nice color. Some of the SDBs looking good as they can pop up in a few days in between freezes.

... I made it! Iris in bloom from April til first frost and still going.

Diana Nicholls

Gainesville, Virginia



12 November

...Close inspection of the JI clump shows fading blooms, dried stalks and 4 new bud stalks.



Howard Brookins

TAKEN IN SAN FRANCISCO ON NOVEMBER 2ND

Who says JIs don't rebloom!

Howard Brookins

Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

Something Different

Dick Gibson

Two fine articles in the spring 1989 *Recorder* by Bernice Miller and Louise Smith should be re-read several times. Perhaps every year each winter to be reminded of what our favorite iris needs for good health.

Louise mentions organic matter and soil additives but makes no mention of mulch.

Bernice wrote on page 19, "If the climate from which the iris come is much warmer, mulch the iris for winter and remove the mulch after freeze danger in spring to prevent rot, especially if you have a great deal more rainfall than where the iris originated."

As mulching is one of my favorite cultural practices, that regarding removing the mulch was disturbing. However, from Sacramento I cannot suggest Bernice isn't correct in removing the mulch from cold weather plantings.

For those in climates similar to mine I do not agree to removal. Here's why. After giving my better rhizomes to my son and a friend of his (it would put me in a bad light to give him scrubby ones), I ended up with the scrubby ones. That's what happens when you become inactive for 6 or 7 years. After being out of the ground for a month or two, they were planted in November, 1988 in what had been a mulched strawberry bed. The mulch was saved and used around the iris.

They were watered when there was lack of rain. Between planting and April, 1989, 16-16-16 was sprinkled on the mulch and watered in three times. During spring 1989 all but a few showed very good healthy growth and eight of the forty rhizomes bloomed. One fan rotted and the leaves were removed, the balance of the clump surviving.

Most amazing were two tiny dried-up rhizomes of *Immortality* that looked really pitiful with little or no chance for survival. As there were two spots open, I planted them anyway, expecting nothing. But they grew and on May 16, 1989 they were transplanted to a new bed with leaves 24" tall.

I feel mulch was a major factor in my success, as it has been in the past.

The whole bed was transplanted May 16 and 17, 1989 including those with pods. This was done very carefully with Brooksie's help. All were transplanted without cutting the fans back in the usual way the roots were kept from drying out and were immediately replanted in another

bed and watered and watered the next day. Some plants were supported by short sticks to keep them upright. They were removed three or four days later when no longer needed. The beds were mulched with alfalfa hay after planting.

Ten days later the new beds looked like they had been there for a year. Only two leaves drooped for a couple of days. There is no way to tell how much they were set back, but I am expecting fall bloom. So far this method of transplanting must be considered a success.

To further keep this from being a scientific experiment, I will introduce an entirely different factor - planting in a trench instead of on a ridge. This idea occurred to me many years ago and I have used it with beans and tomatoes but not iris. I think it was Ben Hager who told me that Collie Terrill's garden in Wasco California had been under water for quite a few days and they survived very well. Also, while in Moonshine Garden's Potter Valley garden a few days before transplanting, Monty Byers mentioned that some scattered iris blooming in a plot away from the main garden had been under water for an extended time earlier in March but were obviously growing and blooming very well.

Not hesitant about trying something unorthodox, the beds mentioned above are two feet wide with a three foot path between them. The soil removed to make the trench was put on the path. Planting two rhizomes at the edges of the trench, toes out, gave the plants sufficient space and provided a wide walkway. As mentioned, the trenches were mulched.

The above was written in late May 1989 but put in storage to see what happened.

To continue...

Though the plants looked strong and healthy, fall bloom in 1989 was poor. *Queen Dorothy* had 2 stalks, *Violet Classic*, one.

However, *Immortality* was great—nine stalks appearing sequentially, July 28th until October 15, three months of nearly continuous bloom. There could have been more but there not enough mature rhizomes to continue the show.

The two beds had to be moved in February 1990 and back they came to my backyard. The same way, in clumps, but this time no bloom stalks to worry about.

During the nine months in 'trench culture' three rhizomes were lost to rot, the others in the now large clumps surviving. A slight slope made sure water did not collect for any extended period of time. If there had been a drenching rain the lower

Spring 1990 bloom has been exceptional. Clumps of **Spirit of Memphis**, **Earl of Essex** and **Lemon Reflection** were exceptionally notable but all varieties bloomed at their normal height and bloom size.

1. conserves water by keeping the surface from drying out.
2. enhances the tilth of the soil which contributes very materially to a point that Louise states on page 24, Vol 36. "The crux of the moisture problem is that roots do not grow in dry soil or in water but grow in the moist air spaces between the solid lumps making up the soil." Mulch keeps those moist air spaces intact.
3. is incorporated into the soil, with the minerals that were in the mulch.
4. almost eliminates weeding. Though time consuming to spread mulch, it takes far less time than weeding. An added benefit-you are not down on your knees.

1. puts water where the plant is, not beside it-a major conservation of water-perhaps 50-70 percent or more.
2. does not water the walkway as in ridge planting-you walk in mud only from rain.

The method worked beautifully in California, perhaps it will work in other climates also. With our 4th year of non-stop drought continuing unabated it may be—save water or you can't have an iris garden.

I would like to know if anyone has had the iris **Dawn** (George Yeld, 1911) rebloom for them. It is a small flowered, clear yellow self, listed as an IB in the 1939 *Checklist*. I have had it just over a year and almost every mature rhizome sent up a bloom stalk starting in mid October and continuing thru mid November. I have searched through the *Historical Chronicles*, old *AIS Bulletins* starting with issue 2 (I don't have a complete set) *BIS* yearbooks back to '33 and every hardcover book on iris I own. No mention of **Dawn's** reblooming proclivities and, even more frustrating, not a hint of parentage. Would greatly appreciate hearing from anyone who has had it attempt rebloom or who has info on its parentage. *Editor*

Editor



Bettwiesen, Switzerland: From our member and correspondent, Thomas Bürge comes the first report ever given on reblooming irises for that country. Bettwiesen has the following environmental conditions:

Precipitation: 140 mm (5.5") annually

Soil: heavy clay on the alkaline side

In his garden peak bloom comes around June 10th. The first frost in autumn arrives mid-October. Irises which have rebloomed are: **SDB**, **Baby Blessed** (Zurbrigg) - occasional rebloom during summer. **TB**, **Autumn Encore** (K. Mohr) - occasional fall rebloom, **Belvi Queen** (Jensen) - reliable fall bloom early enough not to be damaged by frost, **Coral Charmer** (Wright) - rebloom most autumns but late enough to be frost damaged, **Earl of Essex** (Zurbrigg) - occasional rebloom in summer, **Emma Louisa** (Buckles) - occasional rebloom in summer, **Immortality** (Zurbrigg) - reliable early fall bloom when established, **Jean Guymier** (Zurbrigg) rebloom most autumns but late enough to be frost damaged, **Second Look** (Muhlstein) - occasional summer rebloom, **Sign of Leo** (Zurbrigg) - occasional summer rebloom, **Summer Luxury** (E. Smith) occasional summer rebloom when replanted.

Other irises known to be remontants elsewhere and which are grown but have not rebloomed at Bettwiesen are: SDB, Jewel Baby (E. Hall); IB, I Bless (Zurbrigg); BB, Little Susie (Quadros), Marmalade Skies (Niswonger), TB: Autumn Echo (J. Gibson), Best Bet (Schreiner's), Breakers (Schreiner's), Born Again (B. Miller), Brother Carl (Zurbrigg), Cayenne Capers (J. Gibson), Corn Harvest (Wyatt), Dorcas Lives Again

(B. Miller), Grace Thomas (Zurbrigg), I Do (Zurbrigg), Invitation (Schreiner's), Light Beam (L. Blyth), Summer Olympics (R. G. Smith), Varga Girl (Monroe), Witch of Endor (B. Miller).

Wechmar, Germany (DDR): Carl Heinz-Stichling gives the following report of rebloom in that area of the world. Most dependable for rebloom are two TBs; **Ringo** (Shoop) and **Anon** (J. Gibson). Others that rebloom regularly are: **BB Lucky Locket** (Shoop), **TB, Latin Lover** (Shoop), **Gallant Moment** (Schreiner's). Tending to rebloom very late and to be damaged by autumn frost is **Sky Hooks** (Osborne).

West Sussex, England: Coastal area. Mr. Peter Maynard, secretary of the British Iris Society writes the following: Since spring flowering... "I have both **Refined** (Weiler) and **Rainbow Sherbet** (Weiler), both SDBs remonting today, July 18; both are growing vigorously, a different order of magnitude from all other remontant varieties. The r/m stems carry only two buds each although the normal season stems have three or four, **Refined** has a strong sweet scent reminiscent of aniseed in the hot sunshine."



Mike Lowe

LEFT: EARL HALL RECEIVES THE AWARD OF MERIT CERTIFICATE FOR JEWEL BABY FROM AIS PRESIDENT KEN WAITE

Thoughts on Rebloom

Bryce Williamson

As requested, a few notes about my experiences with rebloom, mainly focusing on experience in the home garden at Campbell. With the home garden used mainly for hybridizing and the Los Banos field used for growing the stock that we ship, I have over the last five years learned some things about rebloom. First, the field is a prime example of the conditions needed to obtain good rebloom—rich soil with frequent watering—and that combination provided us with an abundance of bloom in the field from early spring through the fall. The home garden however, better exemplifies the problems that the average gardener may face with rebloomers.

Like many gardeners, I have been using the same space over and over again, continuously in iris since 1978. Quality of plants and bloom has shown the decline that would be expected in a garden where irises have been grown in the same space year in and year out. The last three years in Campbell have been better however, since I did Vapam® the back yard and that fumigating did have a salutary effect on plant and flower quality.

Improvement in plant and flower quality, however, has been offset by the drought in the last three year and severe water rationing during the summer of 1989. Needless to say, many irises that rebloom with ease at Los Banos did not see fit to provide a second round of bloom at Campbell. By early summer of 1989, I needed to get the west side of the garden ready for replanting so that I could move the first year seedling selections of the Mohrs, the Nelsons, as well as my own things, to Campbell for evaluation. Once I picked up the pace of the watering, rebloom began to occur.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the first two things to make it into bloom were **Corn Harvest** and **Earl of Essex**. While I realize that **Corn Harvest** could be wider and **Earl of Essex** could have a better spike, both have been very reliable and I do love the wide, overlapping hafts of **Earl of Essex**. **Skookumchuck** would have to rank, along with **Feed Back**, next on the list of rebloomers. In the case of **Skookumchuck**, with its wonderful hot apricot, orange, and raspberry colorings and its ease of rebloom here at Campbell and at Los Banos, I never understood why it was not more popular with gardeners.

Feed Back has been very good and the coloring is smooth; once it started to rebloom, it kept throwing stalks until every bloom-sized plant had bloomed.

Among the new-to-me rebloomers, **Harvest of Memories** is an improvement on its parent, **Corn Harvest**; however, it does not seem to be



Mike Lowe

HARVEST OF MEMORIES (ZURBRIGG '85)

quite as reliable for rebloom. I do like the fact that the stalks are taller, better branched, and the color is much brighter and cleaner. Zurbrigg's **Amanda Erin** was a most pleasant surprise—a smooth, clean apricot-orange with tangerine beards. I'm anxious to use this with **My Girl Friend** since the latter variety would throw lots of off season bloom for us at Los Banos. I suspect that **Amanda Erin** could be used to produce very nice orange rebloomers in the first generation.

Two of Monty Byers' recent rebloomers performed well at Campbell. **Maiden** is a pretty

blending of soft tints of pink, apricot, and orange and the form is quite good. **Misty Twilight** was not as good for flower form and coloring, but I would have to rank it higher than **Maiden** since once it started to rebloom, it kept throwing stalks and the stalks were nicely branched with good spacing and good bud count. I like the blue-white coloring, the shape, and the blue tips on the beards. A couple of Ken Mohr's new neglecta seedlings tried to rebloom late in the fall and I am hoping that good spring bloom on them and **Misty Twilight** will allow me to make some crosses between them.

Ben Hager's **Remember Spring** is still trying to bloom [winter 89/90]. A nicely shaped, rounded, ruffled blue-orchid with pink tints, it is another of the rebloomers that once it started reblooming kept at it for months. His **Double Up** is a pleasing color combination—I am a sucker anyway, for lavender-blue and blue-violet neglecta plicatas. This **Border Bearded** had lots of branching and lots of buds.

At our Region 14 Fall '89 meeting, both Monty and Ben had many lovely seedlings on display. Monty won the Best Seedling award with a wide and ruffled bicolor plicata. The standards were soft yellow and the rose falls were marked in a fancy plicata pattern of white. Ben had his lovely blue rebloomer on the show bench—it had been so great for coloring at the 1988 Fall Regional—but inside, the artificial lights did not bring out the richness of its coloring. Ben was also showing just a flower of a dark blue-violet plicata that reblooms and is scheduled for introduction in the next few years—with its wide, over lapping hafts, and great form, it looked to be as good as anything in that color class in spring blooming Tall Bearded irises.

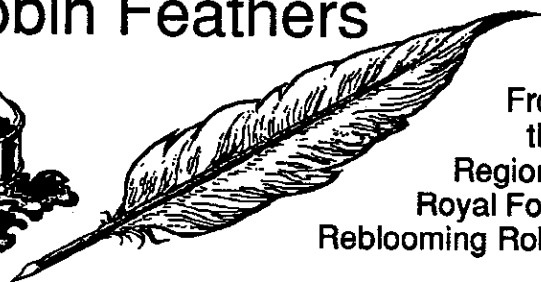
My experiences here at Campbell provide me with great hope that we are on the verge of rebloomers that will rebloom in most gardens under average garden conditions.

IRISES FOR 1991

A GARDENER'S COLLECTION

It's time to order our sixth annual iris calendar. Make check to AIG for single copies, send \$5.00. Quantity purchases come in packets of ten or multiples of ten: the price for packets of ten is \$30.00. Order from C. J. Lack, AIG Sales Director, 718 West 67th Street, Tulsa, OK 74132

Robin Feathers



From
the
Region 4
Royal Four
Reblooming Robin

Polly Anderson, VA—late August '89:

...This will be a hasty input as I am off to England tomorrow. All my rebloomers were super in the spring and have done exceptionally well, increasing in size and health all summer. The rain is just so much better than my watering during our 2 drought years. ...I wish I had better control over my rebloomers in their second blooming period. Although always welcome, mid-August for **Bethany Clare** and **Queen Dorothy** seems early. Is it the nature of these two or just a random happening? The stalks seemed a little shorter than the spring blossoming, but that was the only difference that I could see.

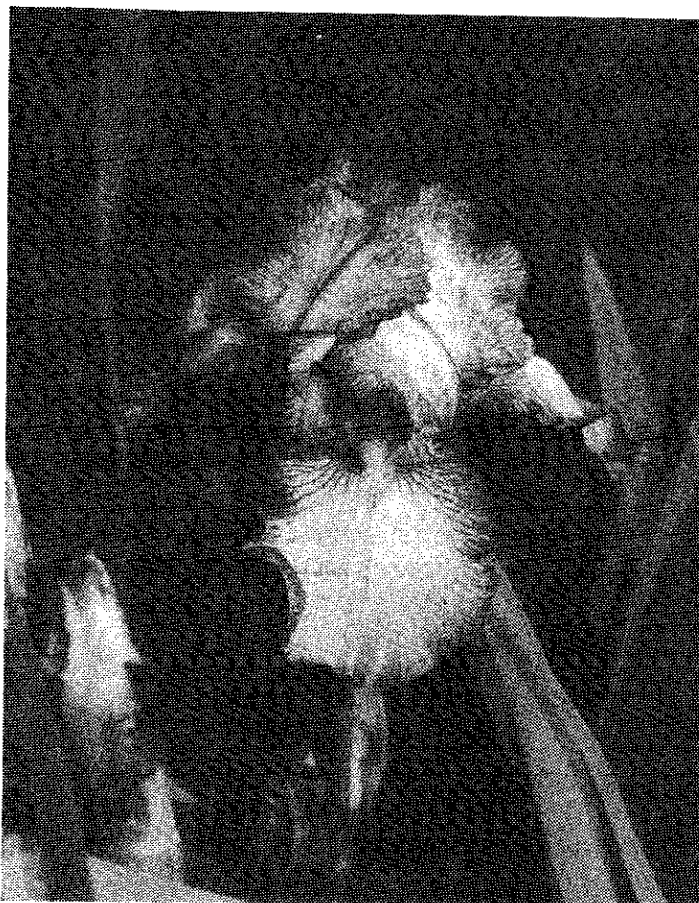
Libby Dufresne, MD—late September '89

...The robin caught me in midst of the county fair—10 days when all else gets put aside. I had one iris, **English Cottage**, win a blue ribbon. It would never have won at our shows as there was both water and cricket damage—but it had 3 open blooms and 3 buds showing color. I've tried to take a bloom each show so people would become aware they are available. ...We had a good trip to Russia but saw very few flowers of any kind. "Gardens" are rows of trees with weeds underneath. No lawn mowers. There were beds of Iris in Kazan but a very old variety—name unknown. The guide assured me that they had *always* grown there.

Clarence Mahan, VA—early October '89:

The C & P Fall Show is just a week and a half away, the frost is on the pumpkin (and the irises) and this year, for the first time, Frank Jones will not be here. How we will miss Frank! I fear for the future of the C&P fall show without Frank's carload of irises. ...It was a joy to be able to judge the fall show at Fredericksburg last week. Such an array of color! It was our finest Regional ever. Diana Nicholls' stalk of **Jennifer Rebecca**, which won Queen, was a knockout! Had it not been in the show, I believe Mike and Anne's lovely little stalk of **Tawny** would have taken top honors—a charming entry and the grooming

was immaculate. The entries of **Duke of Earl** and **Eternal Bliss**, both hybridized by Monty Byers, are indications of how gorgeous rebloomers of the future are going to be...of course, **Earl of Essex** can compete with the once bloomers in



Mike Lowe

PRINCE OF EARL (W. MOORES '89)
A DYNASTY TO COME?

a quite respectable manner. I was personally pleased to see **Jennifer Rebecca** take top honors because it has had my vote for favorite rebloomer ever since it was introduced. It is in a class by itself and it has rebloomed more dependably for me than anything but **Baby Blessed** and the Jones and Noe seedlings I grow.

...enjoyed Mike's judges training session at F'burg very much. He gave all of us much to think about. The one point I questioned (read disagree with) was the suggestion that good dependable all weather rebloomers are likely to come from merging good cold weather rebloomers with warm climate rebloomers. Based on the results achieved by other hybridizers and my own experience, getting improved flowers into dependable rebloomers is more likely to be obtained by crossing dependable cold climate rebloomers with *very vigorous, outstanding performing* once bloomers with outstanding flowers. The

path of using warm climate *rebloomers* to get anything dependable in cold climate areas is, I fear, most likely to lead to frustration.

The greatest enemies of cold climate remontancy are, I suspect, the growth habits and tenderness of *I. mesopotamica* (syn. Ricardi). These are the attributes of many "California" irises that make them do so well in California and other warm, dry climates and so poorly everywhere else. These are the habits that have caused so many gardeners in the East and North to give up on irises. The warm climate rebloomers tend to be irises that have great vigor without losing the *I. mesopotamica* growth habits. Their remontancy is triggered too late to perform in areas with cold, wet and early winters. There are exceptions to this generalization, e.g. **Vanity**, **Victoria Falls**, but the exceptions seem to be those which are not dependable warm climate rebloomers.

Since the large, spectacular flowers of our once bloomers probably owe more to *I. mesopotamica* than any other species, we have a "catch 22". We want the flowers but not the growth habits of *I. mesopotamica*. Some irises like **Vanity** (but not **Beverly Sills**) seem to meet this objective. When crossed with cold weather rebloomers, chance will give a **Jennifer Rebecca**. Some once bloomers that might make good parents used with the most dependable cold climate rebloomers: **Fiction**, **Instructor**, **Stellar Lights**, **Dusky Challenger**, **Raspberry Frills**, and the border **Novella**. All this is pure speculation, of course....What we need is more Eastern hybridizers. You can't fault people out West for hybridizing irises, but you can fault people back East for not hybridizing. The more people we get hybridizing irises here, the more dependable growers and performers we will have being introduced.

...*Dream on Alice* would be a wonderful name for an iris. Playing on the theme, how about *Cheshire Cat* for a rebloomer? Remember how he appears, disappears, reappears?

Diana Nicholls, VA—mid-October '89:

...**Golden Encore** has been almost an ever-bloomer for me this year. I don't know what it is using for fans to bloom on. It sits on top of a hill by the house and gets no water. It even gets cheated when it does rain as it is partially under the roof overhang. Another almost everbloomer has been **Summer Holidays**. I have lost track of the rebloom on it—I think its about the 8th go round. It sits up on the hill with **Golden Encore**.

Autumn Bugler has also been in bloom off and on all summer and now is really getting going. **Refined** bloomed from April through July with nothing til October. **Belvi Queen** has sent up some incredible stalks in mid-August. They were show stalks! The garden is beginning to look like spring!...I have never had **Bethany Clare** even think about blooming in August, I am glad to know it does not always wait til October. I added **Eternal Bliss** to my garden this year.

...The record heat moved some of the iris blooms along much faster than I wanted. Now the rain has done some damage and it is cold. With the rain, the slugs have been out all over the stalks. They are eating the buds before they open. I will have some things for the show on Saturday but not as many in good condition.

J.D. Stadler, NC—late October '89:

I have had some rebloom (even though the main bed was replanted in July) on undisturbed clumps throughout the garden. The first was a stalk of **Retreat** in August which has never rebloomed for me. **Lemon Duet** grows like a weed but never reblooms. Do have some good seedlings out of it. **Baby Blessed** bloomed in August and September. The week after fall regional a seedling out of **Spirit of Memphis X Bess Bergin** started blooming and the clump has 8 stalks in various stages of bloom. It is a heavily ruffled yellow with a lime green tint. It will probably be introduced in '92. I am excited about this one. Also had several stalks on a cross of **Spirit of Memphis X Earl of Essex**—a plicata in yellow and white with brown stitching—I like this one too. Numerous others have rebloomed, but these are the only remontant seedlings with possibilities.

...I think Clarence's idea on vigor in remontants is correct. Almost all rebloomers grow like weeds, and even if my idea of using these on warm climate rebloomers does not give dependable rebloom, the least it would do is put some vigor in the once bloomers. I still think this method could bring some good things 2-3 generations down. I fear if we keep inbreeding our cold weather remontants, some of the vigor will be lost. I have always felt that hybridizers should bring some outside blood into their lines. ...Our Region is really becoming bud-count conscious. To me it is a fault if an iris does not have 6 or more; my personal preference is 7-10 and I consider less than 5 a major fault.

...Regarding rot in rebloomers: I think part of

the problem in our area may be frozen stalks. It has been my experience in late fall rebloomers that a freeze comes and the stalks starting will turn to mush. If left alone that rhizome will rot and maybe spread. I cut those stalks off down to the rhizome and have no more problem.

B.J. Brown, NC—mid-November '89:

We were lucky to come out of Hurricane Hugo with 4 trees down and a couple dozen shingles blown from the roof. This was really the worst storm I have ever experienced and the destruction in the area was a disaster. ...Rebloom here in the Charlotte area has been rather sparse and continued over several months. In the process now are **I Bless** which withstood 2 nights of 30 degree weather and **Witch of Endor** which has 2 stalks that are trying to make unless we get another cold snap. **Orchid Cloud** was my first rebloomer. This has not done as well for me as I would have liked. I first saw it in Spartanburg 3 years ago when Walter Hoover (Tryon, NC) brought to the meeting a perfect stalk with 3 open blooms. At the time, I thought it was the most perfect rebloomer I had ever seen, but have not seen it grown so well since nor has it done that well for me. I still like the color but the form leaves a little to be desired. **Baby Tears** and **Baby Blessed** are the 2 small ones that bloomed well, and **Honey Glazed** bloomed after missing a couple or years here. ...**Queen Dorothy** bloomed on 2 occasions—rather early on one planting and later on another. The latter produced a seed pod which seems about mature and has withstood the cold weather this week. If it threatens to get really cold I will bring it into the greenhouse. I am listing this as a self since nothing else was in bloom when she did that last flower.

Lloyd Zurbrigg, VA—late November '89:

...what a lovely October we had, especially in Roanoke where there were *nearly* freezes. (Not so here in Radford.) All in all it was a plicata fall. The border iris plicata admired during Regional back in May sent up a bloom on Nov. 3rd and was still way below the upper limits in size and height. A sibling was a superb plicata with solid blue style arms—a startling contrast to the near white petals. I really feel these 2 may be genuine rebloomers. Another exciting find; the yellow amoena out of **Immortality** sent up 3 stalks in late October. It may remount too late for here, but everything was re-set so there is still the possibil-

ity of earlier rebloom. The 2 seedlings that won in Regional shows have been named: the silver one is now **Silver Dividends** and the lovely yellow self is **Sunny Disposition** (after I contacted the man who was holding the name)....It was great to hear that two of you had rebloom on **Bethany Claire**. It is being very stingy with it for most of us. I do agree that one had best avoid the tender CA rebloomers, yet I do try a few crosses with them. But time after time, the offspring will inherit the tenderness and this breaks your heart when you get a really pretty one. It is interesting to hear about stalks coming on **Doublemint**—I bought 2 of this the year of introduction and have yet to see a bloom on it either is spring or fall. I cannot figure out why **Marita** disliked this wet season. I had trouble with her this year too.

...I agree that less than 5 buds is a big fault, but I have to admit that I am introducing a novelty that has only 5 this year—and this trait seems to want to appear in all its seedlings. Still it has superb branching, novel coloring, excellent ruffled form and gives the novel coloration to many of its offspring.

Vic Layman, VA—early January 1990:

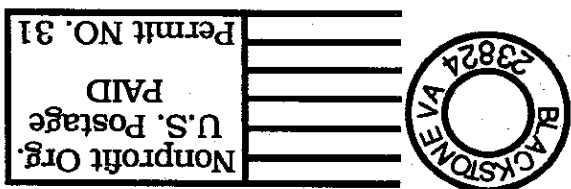
Hello 1990! My rebloom was the best ever this year. The *stars* were **Immortality** with 16 blooming stalks in one clump at the same time; **Jennifer Rebecca** with huge flowering stalks—one with 17 buds; **Queen Dorothy**, **Pink Attraction**, **Grace Thomas**, **Perfume Counter** and **Harvest of Memories** which had strangely beautiful branching. Also had bloom on **Doublemint**, **Feedback** and **Sugar Blues**, among others. No bloom this year on **Coral Chalice** or **Cloudless Sunrise** or on the Weiler '88 introductions that I purchased last year—**Jolt**, **Blitz** and **Rainbow Sherbet**. AND—no bloom on **Baby Blessed**!!! Or maybe it's because I don't have it?

...The Fall Regional this year could not have been better. I'm very proud to belong to Region 4 where the love and effort really exudes for the rebloomers! I hope to see the day where anything but a remountant is a second class citizen.

Overheard at an Iris Show



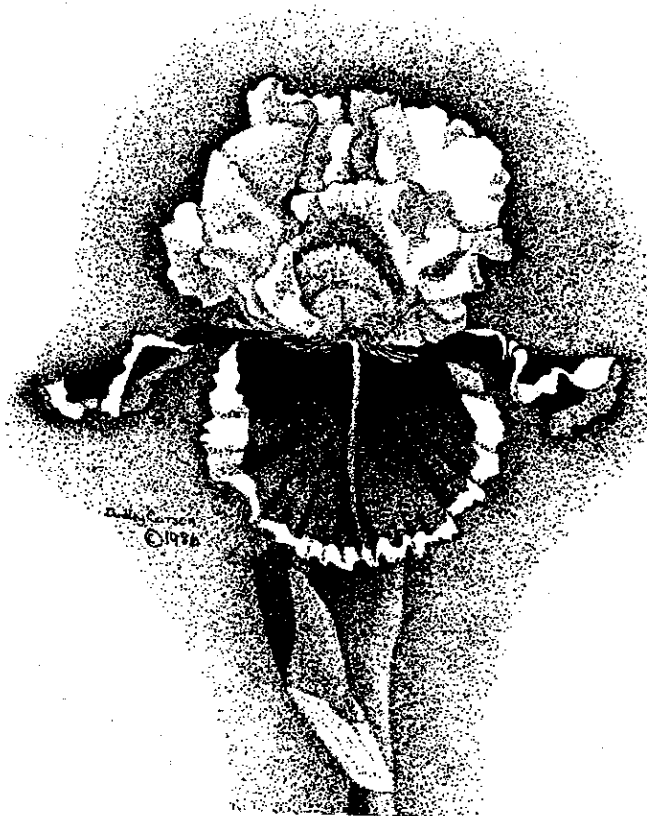
Two ladies were inspecting the exhibits at a Fall show. They were particularly impressed with the **Queen of Show**. One was heard to remark, "That is certainly a lovely iris, indisputably the best here today, but—does it rebloom?"



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