

# THE REBLOOMING IRIS RECORDER



LITTLE BLUE EYES

FALL 2002  
VOLUME 60

### **OFFICERS**

**President** Clarence Mahan 7311 Churchill Rd. McLean, VA 22101  
**Vice President** Claire Honkanen PO Box 235, Isle of Palms, SC 29451  
**Secretary** Joanne Prass-Jones 35572 Linda Dr. Fremont, CA 94536  
**Treasurer** Margaret Sutton 16592 Road 208 Porterville, CA 93257

### **DIRECTORS**

**Northwestern** Florence Wheat 2201 East 3380 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84109  
**Northeastern** Larry Douchette, 482 Middelsex Ave, Wilmington, MA 01887  
**Southwestern** George Sutton 16592 Road 208, Porterville, CA 93257  
**Southern** Everette Lineberger 2460 Compton Bridge Rd, Inman, SC 29349  
**Eastern** Joan Roberts 341 Schwartz Rd, Gettysburg, PA 17325  
**Mid Western** Tim Stanek 233929 Ellington Ave, Glenwood, IA 51534

### **APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS/CHAIRMEN**

**Publicity Director** Dr. John Weiler 1146 West Rialto, Fresno, CA 93705  
**Membership** Charlie Brown 3114 S. FM 131 Denison, TX 75020-0724  
**Editor** Robin Shadlow 16124 Shirley St, Omaha, NE 68124  
**Slides Charmen** Margaret and George Sutton 16592 Road 208, Porterville, CA 93257

### **OTHER CHAIRMEN**

**Questions/Answers** Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg Box 52444 Durham, NC 27717  
**Nominating Committee** James Ennenga 6913 Chartwell Rd, Knoxville, TN 37931  
**Past President** Rosalie Yerkes Figge 4 Maryland Ave, Towson, MD 21286

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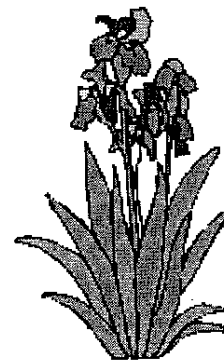
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**COVER:** Little Blue Eyes (Weiler 93) Winner of the 2002 Cook-Douglas Medal  
Photo provided by Sutton Iris Gardens

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## President's Message

It is a great honor to have been elected your president. I knew when I accepted the nomination that I would be confronted by two immediate challenges, namely the need to find an editor for the *Recorder* and the need to find a slides chairman. I sometimes think that there is a special angel or good fairy, choose which you will depending on your religious beliefs, who intervenes when I have problems to solve. As soon as I took office, Robin Shadlow stepped forward and volunteered to be our editor. Then Margaret and George Sutton volunteered to be co-chairs of our slide program. Talk about good luck! What wonderful members we have in our society!

We are all facing two additional challenges. We should be striving to increase interest in reblooming irises and get our membership numbers to start growing. We should also be working on ways to get our revenues up. Most of our expenses are related to production and distribution of the *Recorder*. Donations to the Reblooming Iris Society are tax-deductible, and welcome! But the best way you can help is by recruiting new members.

One very good thing you can do to support the objectives of RIS and spread the word about reblooming irises is to give a gift membership, for three years if practicable, to the garden writer for your local newspaper or to the host of your local TV or radio garden show. These are the people who introduce the gardening public to new garden plants. When people learn that there are irises that bloom in the summer and fall they want to grow them. Giving such a gift might also attract new members for your local iris society and in this way do a "double duty."

No matter how often I see a stalk emerging from an iris fan in summer or autumn, I never fail to experience a sense of surprise. Even more delightful is the sudden appearance of an iris flower in summer or autumn when I had not previously detected an emerging stalk. The Japanese have a word that describes such an emotional experience: *aware* (pronounced: ah-wah-ray). *Aware*, for which there is no equivalent word in English, refers to a person's internal response to the emotional quality inherent in the external world. Its most elementary meaning is a sense of 'Ah!'

I suspect that you, too, experience this sense of 'Ah!' when you see an iris blooming in autumn. There is, however, an even more intense emotional high that reblooming iris hybridizers experience. Seeing your own iris seedlings bloom in the fall is intoxicating. I tell you this because I would like to encourage all of our members to expand their enjoyment of reblooming irises by trying their hand at breeding new reblooming iris cultivars. If you do this, even if it is only with one or two crosses a year, you will certainly enhance the pleasure you get from irises. And who knows? You might obtain the first dependable reblooming iris to win the Dykes Medal!

It was to encourage you to "give a go" at making crosses that I asked several hybridizers to write articles identifying cultivars they considered to be good parents for obtaining good reblooming iris seedlings. Another way you can support the goals of AIS and RIS, is to teach a child, perhaps your son or daughter or grandchild, how to hybridize irises. Educating our youth is a good thing in itself, but by showing a child how to hybridize reblooming irises you might also be introducing a young person to a lifetime of enjoyment. Think of the great beauty that Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg's mentor gave the world when he taught Lloyd, who was a teenager at the time, how to hybridize irises.

At the general meeting in Memphis I discussed the possibility of our society having an iris photography contest with three categories of slides: reblooming irises, once-blooming irises and irises in artistic design or gardens. If we could generate enough participation in such a contest, this would be a way we could gain some good slides for our reblooming iris slide programs and aid AIS by giving the once-bloomer and artistic slides to the AIS slide program. Do you think such a contest is a good idea? We will discuss this at our Board Meeting next spring, and if we do undertake it we will need to have some "pledges to participate." We will also need a committee chairman to organize and run the contest and write the rules.

Our new slides program co-chairmen, Margaret and George Sutton, are in critical need of good slides of reblooming irises. Please, if you have good slides of reblooming irises, send a copy of your slides to Margaret and George. Hybridizers take heed! I am making sure that there are good slides of VIOLET MUSIC, CHRISTIANE ELIZABETH and UNCHAINED MELODY in the RIS slide collection. What are you going to do? If you want your irises to be seen by others, there is no better way than to send slides of your introductions to the slide program. By the way, in the so-called "good old days" copies of slides were inferior to the originals. This is no longer true.

I hope you have a pleasant, safe winter. But please do not spend all your free time dreaming over iris catalogues. Take an hour or two to write an article on rebloomers for the spring issue of the *Recorder*. The key to our membership growth and future success is having an interesting society journal jam-packed with articles. Do it!

Clarence Mahan

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#### Membership Information

Single Annual	\$7.00
Single Triennial	\$18.00
Family Annual	\$8.00
Family Triennial	\$21.00
Single Life	\$120.00
Dual Life	\$150.00

#### Advertising Rates

Full Page	\$50.00
Half Page	\$30.00
Quarter Page	\$15.00
Eighth	\$10.00
Inside Cover	\$75.00
<i>limit 1 full page/issue</i>	

You can check to see when your membership expires by looking at your mailing label.  
The first number on the right is the year, then the month.

The label shown here would be January 2003.

\*\*\* Remember the first two numbers designate the year\*\*\*

James Doe  
4566 Somewhere Dr  
Anywhere

03/01  
("YEAR")

**GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
REBLOOMING IRIS SOCIETY  
APRIL 26, 2002 AT MEMPHIS, TN**

Outgoing President, Charlie Brown, called the annual meeting to order at 11:35 am on April 26, 2002, at the Marriott East in Memphis, Tennessee. There were 32 members present. Board members present were introduced: Rosalie Figge, George Sutton, Margaret Sutton, and Claire Honkanen. Charlie Brown recalled items discussed during the Board Meeting on Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. No budget was adopted and the only expense was the publication of the Recorder. A motion was made and passed to approve the minutes of the last meeting as printed in the fall Reblooming Iris Recorder. Margaret Sutton, Treasurer, handed out copies of our current fiscal status. Not much interest was earned this past year. Total assets as of 3/31/02 were \$12,800. A motion was made and passed to accept and file the Treasurer's report for an audit at a later date.

Rosalie Figge, Chairperson of the nominating committee presented the new slate of officers: President-Clarence Mahan; Vice-President-Claire Honkanen; Treasurer-Margaret Sutton; and Secretary-Joanne Prass-Jones. A motion was made and passed to elect by acclamation.

Charlie Brown spoke for the last time as President and thanked everyone for their assistance. He requested members to write and send in articles for the Recorder as the number of pages are down.

Rosalie Figge installed the new officers. A motion was made and passed to adjourn the business portion of the meeting.

Clarence Mahan took over the microphone and spoke about his past experience with RIS. He recalled working with Rosalie when she was President and working on by-laws. Clarence asked for articles for the Recorder as people are interested in what's going on everywhere. A bigger and better Recorder is necessary for membership to grow. Two important positions are open: Editor for the Recorder, and Slide Chairman as Olive Waters has stepped down. George and Margaret Sutton volunteered to be Co-Slide Chairpersons. Clarence suggested the possibility of a photo contest with prizes donated from nurseries and hybridizers. More about the contest will be in the fall Recorder. Dave Niswonger posed a question about types of soil and commented that this would be a good subject for an article.

Bernice Miller is 90 years old and is in a nursing home. She has three new introductions but they were never registered.

Charlie Brown encouraged members to send in their rebloom reports. He also commented on mistakes in the spring '02 Recorder's listing of Directors and Officers.

Carolyn Ann Nave talked about her garden viewing on Sunday. She welcomed everyone to Memphis and is very interested in growing only rebloomers.

A motion was made and passed to adjourn.

Our speaker, Terry Aitken, was then introduced. Terry is a registered architect in Washington State and grows a multitude of irises. Irises are in bloom the first warm days of spring to the first snowfall. The push is on for flower form and substance. There aren't too many oranges in the reblooming group. He is also looking for Species rebloomers. Terry showed many slides of rebloomers. A sampling of names includes; October Skies, Stellar Lights, Frost Echo, Friendly Seas, and Southern Sun (JI-RE). He looks forward to the future and the work that is being done with hybridizers throughout the country.

The meeting was then adjourned until next year in Fredericksburg, Virginia in May 2003.

Respectfully submitted by: Joanne Prass-Jones, Secretary.

**Minutes of the Board Meeting  
Memphis, Tennessee 25 April 2002**

Our meeting was called to order April 25, 2002 by president Charlie Brown. He welcomed all present which included past president Rosalie Figge, Margaret Sutton, Claire Honkanen, Joanne Prass-Jones, Clarence Mahan, Mary Brown and George Sutton.

Minutes as printed in the fall *Recorder* were reviewed and approved.

Margaret Sutton gave the treasurer's report. The books have been audited, and Margaret has a copy of that report. She expressed concern that expenses were \$500 more than income in the current year. There was a discussion of a proposed budget or estimate of expenses in the future. It was agreed this matter could be decided by the incoming administration.

Charlie Brown reported that current membership was 477 members, but he was optimistic and expressed the view that membership would increase because of continuing interest in rebloomers.

Robert Plank has notified the society that our IRS exemption has been approved. There was discussion about an upgrade of a computer, which is currently at a standstill but which will be finished soon.

Charlie Brown asked Rosalie Figge if she would install the new officers at our general meeting. She accepted this assignment and also agreed to introduce Terry Aitken our guest speaker. There being no other business, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted  
Claire Honkanen

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**Editor's Note**

Putting together the Recorder has been a wonderful experience for me. We are lucky to have such a dedicated group of people on the RIS Board!

I was thinking of ways to encourage people to grow rebloomers and I remembered some of the discussions I'd seen in the past year on Iris-Talk and Iris Forum. There were some people, especially on the forum that had voiced disappointing experiences with obtaining rebloom.

It occurred to me that it might be helpful to offer suggestions of the most reliable cultivars, so that newcomers would be more likely to obtain immediate success. (Of course, I always recommend the Checklist of Reblooming Iris-- it has been an invaluable resource to me.) I had posted a question on Iris Forum and would like to share some of the responses with you. The suggestions were: AUTUMN CIRCUS, BABY BLESSED (SDB), BOUNTIFUL HARVEST, CANTINA, CLARENCE, FOREVER BLUE (SDB), HEMSTITCHED, HI HO SILVER, LADY EMMA (MTB), LITTLE SHOWOFF (SDB) LO HO SILVER (IB), MY FRIEND JONATHAN, PAGAN DANCE, PINK ATTRACTION, PRECIOUS LITTLE PINK (IB), ROSALIE FIGGE, QUEEN DOROTHY, and TOTAL RECALL.

I hope that 2002 was a wonderful rebloom season for you! Make sure to send your rebloom reports in.

Robin Shadlow

**Hybridizers I Have Known**  
**Half a Century of Advancement in Reblooming Iris**  
**By Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg**

There was little enough happening in the advancement of rebloom among iris back in 1950. Tom Craig had nearly covered a mountain top with iris blooms in the San Diego area of California, and was one of the very few hybridizers who would admit to being interested in rebloom. Many of the introductions of remountants that he made were unsuitable to my Canadian gardens, which was disappointing. I recall once being awakened at 3 am by a call from Tom telling me of his enthusiasm for the new dominant amoenas of Paul Cook, and of their excellence as parents.

An eastern hybridizer who took the remountancy of the bearded iris very seriously was Dr. J. Percy Brown of Barre, Massachusetts. He made his selections based on growth and rebloom over several generations, and succeeded in producing varieties that performed reliably in the northeast. Because of the criteria used in the selection of seedlings, the flowers were greatly inferior to those of once bloomers of the same period. Early rebloom characterized many of his introductions, making them of greater value to northern gardens.

When I decided to obtain a master's degree, Indiana University was my school of choice. I found that the only active AIS member in Bloomington was Dr. Raymond G. Smith of the speech department. Dr. Smith was not anxious to meet a student iris enthusiast and probably thought to put me off with his statement that he was interested only in reblooming iris. He could scarcely believe me when I stated that I had been breeding for rebloom for several years. Raymond gave me several rows in his garden, enabling me to do a little hybridizing while my studies continued. One of Raymond's unique habits was to stand and stare at his iris, observing keenly each variation in growth pattern. Most hybridizers might so indulge themselves during bloom season, but this was a summer-long scrutiny.

My lifetime college position was as a professor of music at Radford College, (later Radford University), in Radford Virginia. This city lies in the foothills about 35 miles southwest of Roanoke. Attending my first meeting of the Blue Ridge Iris Society, I met Frances Brown, who had introduced WESTERN HILLS quite some years before. I had purchased it while still living in Canada. Frances was an enthusiastic hybridizer and produced many lovely introductions, but was not really interested in the rebloom trait.

Not long after being transplanted to the southeast, I met Frank Jones of New Jersey. He was the first person I knew who had iris bloom from spring right through until freeze-up! This was certainly excellent publicity for the reblooming iris. Frank was always looking for very late-blooming ones, and remountants that rebloomed very early; thus making sure there was no gap at that difficult period in the iris year. Soft-spoken and with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, he took an active and cheerful part in the work of Region 19 (Staten Island and New Jersey.) It was very sad that macular degeneration took away his sight during his later years. Both Frank and Raymond have given many remountant introductions that are still popular today.

Another early hybridizer of remountant iris was Lloyd Austin of Placerville, California. Trained as a forester, he embraced horticulture, majoring in iris. At first the emphasis was on aril and aril-bred varieties, but he switched to remountants, and featured them in his colorful catalogues for a number of



years. Like the introductions of Tom Craig, not all of these were of reliable growth in eastern gardens. Lloyd also developed iris with extra petaloid parts, (horns, spoons and flounces) from some plicata seedlings of Sydney Mitchell, also a Californian. These he dubbed Space-Agers in deference to Sputnik and subsequent space flights.

Region 6 AIS produced a hybridizer of reblooming iris in the person of Earl Hall of West Alexandria, Ohio (immediately west of Dayton.) He and his wife Dorothy kept an "always open" perennial garden, though it was obvious that the iris were the favorites. Earl was single minded in his devotion to bearded iris, and since he used so many of my introductions in his crosses, he persuaded me to drive to Ohio several years to assess his seedlings. I learned the landscape of highway 35 rather well. JEWEL BABY, an SDB remontant, was runner-up for the Cook-Douglas Award, and BABY SNOWFLAKE was successful in winning it a few years later. The former is a very smooth dark violet self, while the latter is a very pale blue with deeper blue beards.

From several dozen seedlings from Earl that I grew in Radford, I chose MATRIX to use in my hybridizing. It did indeed prove to be an excellent parent. This is a very pastel plicata, almost a creamy self which added width of haft, pleasing style, and was reliable with its rebloom. QUEEN DOROTHY, a violet on white plicata, has set some records for volume of rebloom in the midwest, and does well in the east. Its early rebloom should be useful to northern gardens. VIOLET RETURNS is a deep violet with much the same habit of growth as QUEEN DOROTHY. Perhaps the most appealing of Earl's introductions is PINK ATTRACTION, a reblooming child of VANITY.

About 1986, I made the acquaintance of Monty Byers of Potter Valley, California. We struck up a great friendship that lasted until his untimely death. Monty had two goals, reblooming iris and Space-Age iris, both of which I shared. We exchanged many named varieties and seedlings. He and his friend Bill grew about 35,000 seedlings each year, an astounding feat in itself. Many introductions were made in both categories, and his catalogue each year was avidly read by increasing numbers of new iris enthusiasts. Monty definitely deserves much, much credit for making these two groups of iris more popular. Posthumously, he won three Dykes medals, for THORNBIRD, CONJURATION, and MESMERIZER, all Space-Agers. The first is an oddly-colored tan blend, with bright violet thorns or spoons. The second is a white with bright blue rim around the falls and slim, extremely well-branched stalks. My own favorite is MESMERIZER, a white with huge flounces that is reported to rebloom in parts of California. I also like ROCK STAR, a border iris in apricot-orange with raspberry markings and short, upturned horns. HOT is a variegata SDB of good smoothness and reliability. LOW HO SILVER is a widely successful remontant that is an IB. ZURICH is one of his many tall bearded remontants, with great form and clear white blossoms. Not all of Monty's iris were successful in the east, but many were. The mantle of Monty Byers seems to have fallen around the shoulders of George, Margaret and Mike Sutton of Porterville, California. They are very interested in both rebloom and Space-Age categories. Many attractive pictures adorn their lovely catalogues, and I am anxious to see these in real life.

As I write, Clarence Mahan is immediate past-president of the American Iris Society, and in-coming president of the Reblooming Iris Society. His interests extend to many areas of the genus iris. Among them, fortunately, are the rebloomers, and he has hybridized quite a few himself. VIOLET MUSIC is well known for its dependable early rebloom on excellent stalks. SUKY, from the same cross, is not so reliable for rebloom, but has superb color and form, and is a splendid parent. SUKY is named for Clarence's wife, and he now has a "child" of SUKY that bears the name of his real-life daughter,

CHRISTIANE ELIZABETH.

New and enthusiastic hybridizers of reblooming iris are Dr. Donald and Ginny Spoon of Cross Junction, Virginia, in the northwest corner of the state. UNCLE CHARLIE made a sensation at the Oklahoma convention a few years ago, and attracted attention to Winterberry Gardens. This is not a reblooming iris, but many introductions in this category have been made during the past three years. This garden will be on tour at the National Convention next year. Don is studying the resistance of varieties to the iris borer, a work started by another Region 4 hybridizer, the late Charles Nearpass. Such studies are bound to be very valuable for our future.

Of great personal help to me has been the interest and encouragement of Joan and Ken Roberts of Friendship Gardens, now located outside Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. They have introduced my seedlings for the past few years, and grown many seedlings for me. Their garden was on tour two years ago at the National Convention of AIS. There are a lot of great seedlings coming along there. Of the ones already introduced (and I speak of Joan's seedlings), CANARY DELIGHT is probably my favorite. I have always liked amoenas, and this is a bright clean yellow one with excellent form. However, it is sparse with its rebloom. I REPEAT is a new light blue rebloomer of great charm.

An article such as this is likely to be incomplete, but I would be remiss if I failed to mention John Weiler and especially his work with reblooming dwarf irises. Although some of his originations do not rebloom as prolifically in cold winter climates as they do in California where John lives, some are quite dependable with their fall bloom. PLUM WINE and THIRD CHARM merit special mention

Bernice Miller, who wrote wonderful letters in several reblooming iris robins, concentrated much of her hybridizing work toward the objective of dependable red rebloomers. She gave us WITCH OF ENDOR and GIDEON VICTORIOUS.

Other hybridizers who labored diligently to produce dependable reblooming irises were Horace Wright, a nephew of the Wright brothers, who chose not to introduce most of his seedlings, but whose CORAL CHARMER is still a wonderful splash of vibrant color in the autumn garden and Charles Applegate who gave us ROYAL SUMMER and ROYAL ENCORE. Charles worked at Kingwood Center in Ohio.

And I would be remiss, indeed, not to mention the legendary Ben Hager, who included reblooming irises in the Melrose Gardens catalog at a time when other iris nurseries choose to ignore them or to treat them with disdain. Ben bred a number of outstanding reblooming irises, including elegant AUTUMN CIRCUS and very dependable FEEDBACK.

I will close with a mention of Hans and Jacob Sass, who were among the first to hybridize for remontancy. But they really belong to the first half of the 20th century, and I never had the pleasure of meeting them. I hope this survey of some of the hybridizers who have labored for the love of reblooming irises will be of some interest to newer members of the Reblooming Iris Society. My best wishes to all the hybridizers of the 21st century.

## Something About Nothing

### *Sterling Innerst*

Five or six weeks ago, I was asked to write what I think is the best way to go about breeding for rebloomers. This was to include the irises that one should use to get the best results. The more I have thought about this, the more I realized that I have very little to write about. However, I was committed to file an article by July...this is June 30<sup>th</sup>...so here goes.

Forty years ago I knew exactly how to go about breeding for rebloomers to that in two or three generations I would have acres of irises blooming from last snow to first snow. Well, folks, it has not happened, and I now believe that I will not see it in my lifetime. However, I did disprove all my theories concerning breeding for rebloomers along the way.

When COLORWATCH came along, I was on my way!?! COLORWATCH is mostly from Keppel plicata lines, and I've been told that all plicatas carry the rebloom gene. Still do not know if they do, but I do know that if they do, they do not readily pass it on.

My first idea was to line breed very closely for two or three generations. Then about five years down the road, when I have hundreds of rebloomers showing up in my seedling rows, outcross to select rebloomers and continue that trend. (COLORWATCH was an unplanned rebloomer, by the way.)

I have been line breeding this line for perhaps ten generations. In 2001 (finally), I had one—ONE—seedling from this group of seedlings rebloom, but it rebloomed in the greenhouse in December. I had potted all seedlings showing bloom stalks in late November, and bloomed them in the greenhouse. This seedling was a taller, vastly improved COLORWATCH. I am still debating whether a December rebloomer is worth the trouble when breeding for rebloomers. Since this was the first seedling to rebloom from this line, I am keeping it for further thought. I set and harvested three pods from this seedling in the greenhouse.

The second way I went about producing the first dreamed of ever blooming iris garden was to find and line breed two basically unrelated irises from other hybridizers that rebloomed in my garden. Several generations later, when I had hundreds of rebloomers showing up in my seedling rows, and the GENE set, I would cross this line with the "ever blooming" COLORWATCH line. Presto! I would have rebloomers everywhere. Wrong! Wrong! Wrong! Not one seedling rebloomed from this effort.

I have had row upon row of seedlings from 'rebloomer' X 'rebloomer' with no rebloom in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations. The best results come when I just use rebloomers "whenever." I seem to get the best results using ANXIOUS and MATRIX with once-bloomers.

OVER AND OVER came from the cross SUKY X MATRIX. SUKY does rebloom for me, but her sister VIOLET MUSIC is very dependable. I prefer SUKY's form, stalk, plant habit and other attributes to VIOLET MUSIC. I figure SUKY must carry THE GENE. SUKY passed it on, so in this case, rebloom appears to be recessive. In my garden, OVER AND OVER is a continuous rebloomer when I have established rows and clumps. If rebloom comes from a recessive gene one would think the COLORWATCH line would have produced rebloom in every seedling by now. Not so!!!

AGAIN AND AGAIN is from the cross RENOWN X ANXIOUS. It, too, is blooming most of the time here in Pennsylvania. Again, one would suspect "recessiveness." Remember, line breeding unrelated

rebloomers proved unsuccessful here!

Lately I have just been using MATRIX, ANXIOUS and RENOWN with lots of things. ROMANTIC EVENING x MATRIX gave two seedlings that rebloomed in the seedling rows in the fall of 2001. Do not know how dependable they will prove to be. A ROSALIE FIGGE seedling by a once-bloomer seedling from rebloomer stock shows signs of having the potential for establishing a dependable rebloomer line—time will tell.

Then there is the case of ESTABLISHED POWERS. This is from two once-bloomers, but it has rebloomed all over the place. However, this is a plicata and someone once said all plics carry THE GENE.

I wish that I could tell you what to do and then guarantee that rebloomers will occur. Sorry! I think that the best advice is just to use rebloomers in your breeding and then rebloom may occur now and again. So this has been a little something about not much—at least when one considers the results.

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### **Opportunities in Color, Pattern and Form** *Clarence Mahan*

This past July, in the early morning, I sat on my deck reading *The Washington Post*. Flashes of yellow—goldfinches darting to and from the birdfeeder and swallowtail butterflies feeding on nectar of purple astilbe flowers—provided a distraction from the news of the day. Then I saw it: a yellow iris flower. Of course, I had to get up and once and find out what daring beauty was venturing forth in the heat of July. I did not need to read the plant label to identify it because it a unique iris: Sterling Innerst's 1999 introduction, AGAIN AND AGAIN.

Sterling gave me a rhizome of AGAIN AND AGAIN when it was still a numbered seedling, the product of: RENOWN X ANXIOUS. Although Sterling's registration describes it as a yellow self with a white beard, it is in fact something considerable more than a dependable yellow reblooming iris of good form. A second day bloom appears to be yellow and the day the flower opens it appears yellow from a distance, but up-close examination reveals it has large white "zones" in the middle of the standards and around the beard on the falls. There is also a small dot of red-violet just below the beard that fades out on the second day.

One of the grandparents of AGAIN AND AGAIN is SUKY, which I have described as a "double zonal" because it has white zones on both the red-violet standards and falls. (Keith Keppel has expressed the view that SUKY exhibits the characteristics of both a zonal and a luminata.) It took me some time observing AGAIN AND AGAIN before I realized that this iris has inherited the SUKY pattern but expressed in yellow instead of violet. This has caused me to conclude that the "double zonal" SUKY pattern is inherited independently from the pigment.

Of the sixty plus seedlings I obtained from the cross VIOLET MIRACLE X VICTORIA FALLS, all were some shade of violet. Only SUKY was a "fancy" with the "double zonal" pattern. At least a dozen of SUKY's siblings were cold climate rebloomers, including VIOLET MUSIC. I did not register SUKY as a rebloomer because when it sends up fall stalks in northern Virginia they are usually too late to flower without protection.

There are two significant facts I have learned about SUKY as a parent. First, crossed with the "right" irises, it will produce reblooming offspring, e.g. RENOWN, FOREVER IN LOVE, and CHRISTIANE ELIZABETH. Second, the SUKY "double zonal" pattern is genetically dominant. Even when crossed with a dominant white such as I DO, a portion of the seedlings will have the "double zonal" pattern. A clever, persistent hybridizer might exploit these attributes of SUKY and its offspring to produce the "double zonal" pattern in reblooming iris cultivars in a range of colors, including pink, red, orange and brown.

Experienced hybridizers know some very dependable rebloomers of relatively good form are heartbreakers as parents. An example of this phenomenon is CORN HARVEST. Having bred this iris with a range of other cultivars, I obtained only a couple of seedlings that rebloomed. Almost all of the offspring had inferior form in comparison with their parents, and none demonstrated the strong remontant proclivity of CORN HARVEST. Others who work with reblooming irises have told me that my experience with CORN HARVEST is not unique. The only really good reblooming iris produced by CORN HARVEST, at least the only one I am aware of, is Lloyd Zurbrigg's HARVEST OF MEMORIES.

On the other hand, there are some reblooming irises that have proved to be exceptional parents. One of these is VIOLET MIRACLE (Zurbrigg, '79). VIOLET MIRACLE tends to rebloom rather late in my area, but it is fairly dependable. Crossed with VICTORIA FALLS, it gave me VIOLET MUSIC. Jane McKnew used it as a pollen parent with TITAN'S GLORY, and obtained ROSALIE FIGGE, which certainly is one of the finest modern reblooming cultivars. Earl Hall applied BROTHER CARL pollen on VIOLET MIRACLE to get MATRIX, a prodigious reblooming iris of unique creamy yellow color with pale violet veining. Monte Byers's CANTINA is a result of VIOLET MIRACLE pollen being put on WELL ENDOWED.

Another good parent for rebloomers with good form is I DO, and I think it still has potential as a parent waiting to be exploited. Its one limitation as a parent is that it is a dominant white iris, so regardless of what it is crossed with, an abundance of white seedlings is produced. Still, its non-white seedlings often have decent form and rebloom proclivity.

This past September I was working in my front garden, and sat down on the stone bench to take a break. I then saw several stalks of a white-flowered iris near the front door of my neighbor's house. It was so beautiful! Imagine my surprise when I walked over to examine the iris and discovered it was UNCHAINED MELODY. I have high hopes for UNCHAINED MELODY as a parent because it is a recessive white iris. It is the result of crossing HARVEST OF MEMORIES with SOAP OPERA. All of UNCHAINED MELODY's siblings were rebloomers, but not so prolific in their display of fall bloom as UNCHAINED MELODY.

If I had a lot of space to grow seedlings, I would be using RENOWN and MATRIX as parents far more extensively than I have done. They are both good sources for the plicata gene, and when crossed with plicatas produce seedlings in a wide range of color combinations and patterns. My experience has been that both RENOWN and MATRIX tend to be recessive when it comes to color but dominant in their ability to produce reblooming offspring.

An iris that I believe has significant potential as a parent is Ben Hager's TOTAL RECALL. Its parents, MOTHER EARTH and BONUS MAMA, never rebloomed in my garden. But TOTAL RECALL reblooms with abandon every year.



I continue to believe that the ability of an iris to rebloom is related to its degree of hybrid vigor, coupled with a genetic-based "fast gun trigger" for blooming. I therefore recommend crossing irises that are not closely related as the most likely way to get reblooming seedlings. Some breeders of reblooming irises suggest that a cross of a rebloomer with an early flowering "once bloomer" is more likely to produce reblooming seedlings than crossing two rebloomers. This may be true because line breeding tends to reduce hybrid vigor in the 3rd and 4<sup>th</sup> generations. All of my experience in crossing cold climate rebloomers with warm climate rebloomers has produced negative results for rebloom.

Two areas offer potential gold mines for new, improved rebloomers. The first area is the intermediate bearded (IB) iris class. Not many iris breeders have worked in this area. I would like to see more crosses of standard dwarfs with reblooming tall bearded irises. Some of Chuck Chapman's excellent standard dwarfs might make good parents.

The second potential gold mine is the use of species such as *I. albertii*, *I. imbricata*, *I. croatica*, and *I. balkana*. These species have been little exploited. This means breeding these irises with modern hybrid cultivars should generate much hybrid vigor in the resulting offspring. It might take several generations of breeding to get attractive reblooming iris cultivars from such wide crosses. But great achievements come from bold ventures.

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### Parents for Reblooming Irises By Keith Chadwick

I live at Caldwell, Idaho, which is semi desert (7 to 10 inches of rainfall per year.) We irrigate our iris with sprinklers. I guess sprinklers are a no no because of rot, but we irrigate deeply and not too often, followed by cultivation to hold the moisture. Our soil is slightly alkali, about 7.5 ph. We are U.S.D.A. Zone 6 here in the Snake River Valley.

Some of the iris that we use in our rebloom program are:

CANTINA (Byers 89) It has heavy substance and good branching. It is a reliable rebloomer, but it is not as easy to cross as some iris. The color is red violet and it comes from WELL ENDOWED X VIOLET MIRACLE.

TOTAL RECALL (Hager 92) It has fair substance, good branching and is a zone 4 reliable rebloomer. The color is light yellow and it comes from MOTHER EARTH X BONUS MAMA.

PEACH JAM (Ensminger 89) It has fair substance and carries rebloom, but is not a reliable rebloomer here. We like PEACH JAM because it gives us color.

ROCKSTAR (Byers 90) It is short and does not nick well with some iris. If two iris cross well to produce good offspring, we say they nick. If ROCK STAR nicks well with another iris you get a winner. It is a Space Age iris and carries rebloom.

COMPOSED (Hamner 90) It is rose in color and carries rebloom. It comes from HEATHER BLUSH X ENTOURAGE.

TWICE THRILLING (Osborne 84) It carries rebloom and passes heavy substance to its offspring. We use it a lot to get that substance in rebloomers as so many are short on substance.

Some of our Rebloomers are:

JULY YELLOW (Chadwick Werner 01) To date this is our rebloominingest rebloomer. I just got a phone call from Pocatello, Idaho (zone 3 or 4), "JULY YELLOW is blooming." It's too early to see the results of our crosses to it, but we are hoping.

OASIS RAINBOW (Chadwick 02) is a broken colored iris with most of the colors of the rainbow. It reblooms early here in Idaho. The cross is PEACH JAM X CANTINA. It gets its unusual color from PEACH JAM and its rebloom from CANTINA.

OASIS PLUM JAM (Chadwick 02) The color is plum purple and it is an outstanding rebloomer with its form and substance. It has rebloomed in July, August and September. The cross is PEACH JAM X CANTINA.

LORNAS PRIDE (Elmer Werner 02) The color is avocado green and it is tall, well branched and has lots of substance. It is an excellent rebloomer. We set out a row of its fans last fall and everyone of them rebloomed this summer. If you are working on green, do not miss this one. Now the cross- RAW TIMBER X OLYMPIC TORCH. How did we get such a good rebloomer from two non-rebloomers? We traced back both parents and found rebloom. The parents must both be carriers of rebloom.

OASIS CORAL (Chadwick 03) This pink iris is another outstanding rebloomer. We have observed it for two years and it was an early rebloomer. It has fair form and heavy substance. (PEACH JAM X MABEL ANDREWS) X COMPOSED. Note that all parents are rebloomers or carriers.

We think that you need a rebloomer or a carrier as parents in order to get a rebloomer. Let me explain:

Cross two rebloomers and you get part reblooming offspring.

Cross a rebloomer with a carrier and you get part reblooming offspring.

Cross two carriers and some offspring will rebloom.

Cross a carrier or a rebloomer with a non-carrier and you get no rebloom.

The more rebloomers there are in the parents, the more rebloomers you get.



## Newer and Taller Rebloomers

By Patrick Orr

It is wonderful when an iris reblooms no matter what it looks like, but I have to admit, I prefer an iris stalk that has height and a flower that has form to it. Most of the rebloomers I have are short, and the bloom is not very modern because they are older varieties. I have been crossing these with more modern formed tall bearded irises to get a tall, well formed, reblooming iris.

This year I decided to acquire some newly introduced tall reblooming varieties in the hopes that they are better formed from the onset. I checked through the *1999 Checklist* and the *2000 Registrations and Introductions* books to find those cultivars that meet certain criteria.

First of all, they have to be listed as reblooming iris. The other criterion is that they be registered or introduced between 1997 & 2000, they must be described as being 36" or taller, and the parentage must be known. There are some introductions that are listed as "parentage unknown", and that will not work for me in my hybridizing efforts. Some 2001 introductions may be listed in the *2000 Registrations and Introductions* book because the hybridizer sometimes registers the variety a year prior to introduction.

The following is the list I came up with of Newer and Taller Rebloomers. I may have missed one here and there, but this list names most of them. I am going to try acquiring and growing many of these varieties over the next couple years and I thought just FOR YOUR INFORMATION that I would share this list with you. It would be fun for everyone to acquire and grow some of these over the next couple years. We can determine together how well any of them rebloom, and we can trade them with each other as well.

AGAIN AND AGAIN	(Innerst 99)	LOVELY FRAN	(Weiler 99)
AMETHYST WINTER	(Richards 98)	MIDNIGHT MINK	(Cadd 00)
AUTUMN THUNDER	(Sutton 99)	MISS PORTERVILLE	(Sutton 97)
BLUE FIN	(Sutton 97)	MULBERRY ECHO	(Maryott 97)
BONUS LITE	(Sutton 97)	MYSTERY BLUSH	(Sides 96)
CHRISTIANE ELIZABETH	(Mahan 97)	POLISH PRINCESS	(Cadd 99)
CORNHUSKER	(Stanek 00)	RENASCENT	(Hager 98)
DECKER	(Jameson 98)	RETOLD TALE	(Hager 98)
DIFFERENT DESIGN	(Sutton 97)	RETURN ADDRESS	(Ghio 99)
DOUBLE DRIBBLE	(Ghio 99)	RETURN TO SENDER	(Ghio 00)
DOUBLE SHOT	(Sutton 99)	RETURNING ROSE	(Maryott 98)
ENGLISH KNIGHT	(Sutton 98)	SECOND FIDDLE	(Maryott 98)
FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH	(Hager 98)	SEPTEMBER FROST	(Sutton 97)
FRAGRANTE DELICTO	(Edinger 98)	SPEEDING AGAIN	(Lauer 98)
GOLDEN IMMORTAL	(Sutton 96)	SUMMERTIME BLUES	(Sutton 97)
HIGH IMPACT	(Sutton 97)	TENDERLY	(Nearpass 00)
HIGH POINT	(Sutton 98)	ZAPAD	(Seidl 00)
IRON EAGLE	(Sutton 99)	ZZYZZ	(Richards 99)
LEGENDS OF FALL	(Sutton 98)		

## REBLOOMING PARENTS

By Ginny Spoon, zone 6

While I tend to leave the hybridizing to Don, since he does such a great job, I have been hybridizing ever since Don first taught me how on our first date nine years ago. How romantic, he brought over his pollen and used it on my irises. He gave me a container of pollen from Chaste White, a sibling of Immortality and asked me what I thought would be a good pod parent. I lost no time in deciding to put it on Zurich, then my favorite white rebloomer. That cross produced a dependable ivory-white rebloomer with flowers that had such substance, they would last for weeks. It was such a favorite of mine, I did not want to part with any of it, but I finally introduced it last year as Autumn Ivory.

Clarence Mahan asked Don if he would write an article on his favorite reblooming parents, and Don promised that he would do it. But, Don asked me if I would write one now, and he will tell us what his favorite reblooming parents are later. If I had to choose my best reblooming parent, I would say that without a doubt it was Little John (D. Spoon 1996.) Even though it does not rebloom in zone 6, Little John (Damsel X Queen Dorothy) has been reported to rebloom in California, zone 8. I crossed it a few years ago on Lady Juliet (H. Nichols 1994) which does not rebloom in zone 6, but does in zone 8; and out of those crosses came beautiful seedlings that rebloomed for us.

A rose pink seedling named Second Hand Rose (Lady Juliet X Little John) is one of my favorites. It tied with one of Don's seedlings for best in-Region seedling until one of Lloyd Zurbrigg's spaceage seedlings beat both of us. There is also an amber-colored seedling with a lavender wash I named Liquid Amber (Lady Juliet X Little John). The good branching and bud count of both parents is prevalent in the seedlings along with their ruffling and good form. Little John has pink standards and lavender falls while Lady Juliet has yellow-tan standards, and the falls are a blend of pink and violet. You can see what color arrangements this pair can make. Don has used Little John to produce variegated flowers. Since one of Little John's parents is a plicata, it will throw variegated seedlings. He introduced a variegated rebloomer in 2001 named Peach Berry Swirl (Peach Jam X Little John). Don could explain all of the genetics to you, but since I am writing this article, I won't.

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## My Favorite Iris Parents

By Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg

The very first iris that I loved was WABASH. In the catalogue put out by a professor at Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph it was "A wonder; white standards and violet falls." My mentor and former pastor, A.K. Edmison, allowed me to make crosses in his garden, and I put pollen of WABASH on the very large and much shorter iris, GUDRUN. Many seedlings came from this and the reciprocal cross. The best was named WABASHINE after a tiny Ontario community near Georgian Bay. It did seem that more near-amoenas came when WABASH was the pollen parent.

SAILS AND SEAS was a further development from this line of breeding, having white standards and light blue falls. An even more promising one of similar coloring was GENTIAN FALLS. The latter gave me a gorgeous chartreuse amoena, which I still regret not saving...and it is now forty years since

that bad decision. I did not even set seeds on it, alas. However, by this time the late Paul Cook of Bluffton, Indiana had produced dominant amoenas by incorporating genetic material from a dwarf species, *I. reichenbachii*. This genetic material caused the color of the standards of blues and violets to bleach to near white. The old recessive amoenas like WABASH had been resistant to setting pods when crossed to other recessive amoenas. No such impediment existed in the new dominant amoenas, of which WHOLE CLOTH is an excellent example.

Four years spent at Indiana University's music department (1958-62) pared down my iris holdings, although the late Earl Roberts of Indianapolis and the late Raymond G. Smith of Bloomington were very kind and generous in giving me garden space. The last two years in Indiana were disastrous. I had my own garden and lost spring bloom totally...once to a freeze and once to a hail storm. This made me determine to concentrate on rebloom as a main goal. Paul Cook warned me not to expect much for ten years in this new resolve.

For the next 29 years I was in Radford, Virginia at Radford University. Among the seedlings that bloomed there, was one named GRAND BAROQUE. This iris became one of my earliest favorite iris parents. Color wise, the iris is a bit of a chameleon; opening with a strong infusion of anthocyanine (blue-violet), by the third day it is a yellow amoena. It was noteworthy for size, width, substance and ruffling, qualities needed by most reblooming irises of its day.

The parentage of this excellent breeder is Henry Shaw X Replicata. Henry Shaw was at the top of the popularity poll of white irises. It was produced by Cliff Benson, and named for the curator of the St. Louis Botanical Gardens. The pollen parent was brought out by Dr. Raymond Smith and was not very well known, but it is a dependable and early rebloomer. It had come from crossing Jim Gibson's GIBSON GIRL with pollen of another of Dr. Smith's early introductions, AUGUST GOLD. (It is worth noting that the pod parent of HENRY SHAW is CLIFFS OF DOVER, a very fine amoena from the late Charles Nearpass.)

As a parent, GRAND BAROQUE was able to pass along good form, good rebloom, and excellent plant growth and hardiness. Some of the good seedlings that it produced are:

BAROQUE PRELUDE: a yellow amoena that does not rebloom in the east. However, it won the Award "Best Clump of Iris in Texas" in one of the years that this award was active.

I DO: a full sister in white, reblooms well and is another favorite parent for me.

HALLOWED THOUGHT: a pale blue-violet amoena with lace and lots of rebloom.

I DO did not become a favorite at once. It is a bit short, and the stalks are somewhat thick or heavy. However, the flower is of good form, excellent substance, and the branching is adequate. It proved to be very reliable with its rebloom and very fertile, with good germination of its seeds.

I DO seedlings include:

IMMORTALITY: undoubtedly the most famous, a cool white with self beards. This iris was runner-up for the Dykes Medal and is nearly everblooming. While it does not perform well in all soils, where it is happy its performance is truly amazing. Its buds are lavender, and on cloudy



days a little of this color may appear in the opened flower.

BROTHER CARL: tall white with excellent rebloom

IBLESS: a super reblooming intermediate

ANEW: white with yellow hafts; a useful parent to bring in the Space-Age characteristics as it is from I DO X MISS VENUS

For many years, my work with the Space-Age irises was kept from the world. However, Monty Byers was able to "sell" their worth to AIS and open up this area of hybridizing. Monty and I exchanged plants and pollen for several years. As my interest in these novelties grew, I made many more crosses with them.

MISS JUPITER and MISS VENUS were introduced in 1975, TRUMPET CONCERTO in 1981 and ANNE BOLEYN in 1985. I cannot say that any of these was a favorite parent for me. That honor fell to Monty's MESMERIZER. It proved suitable for this unpredictable east coast climate, and has beautiful, artistically shaped trumpets atop the beards. Another of Monty's that I liked a lot is GOD-SEND. This has given good color variants to my lines, but must be used as a pollen parent, as it would never set pods here. ROCK STAR is yet another of Monty's that did fairly well here. It has given some great coloring to its seedlings but also has a tendency for slow increase.

A favorite Space-Age seedling grown while I was living in Virginia has been named FLYING. It is a shell pink to ivory, with shell pink flounces whose edges are tinted violet. One of the best crosses of many made with FLYING is NN32 (Flying X Godsend). One from this cross, ORNATE, was awarded best seedling at Charlotte two years ago. ORNATE is an orchid-pink with red beards that end in purple pom-poms. BABY'S NOOK, the last iris to bloom here in the tall bearded season, is a fairly deep pink self with huge flounces. It has already produced some wonderful new things.

My goal in hybridizing for the past decade has been to get reliable rebloom for the east, combined with beautiful Space-Age appendages. A favorite group of seedlings toward this end are those from QQ70 through QQ77. The parentage is (Sunny Disposition x Mesmerizer) X (Renown x Mesmerizer). While none of the group approaches the above goals, they grow well and have good flowers.

PP56 WP could end this list of favorite parents. It is a white with well defined giant flounces. It was named last year and is scheduled for introduction in 2003. It has been named SILVER TRUMPETS, and it just won the Alice Bouldin Award as best seedling at our Region 4 Spring Meeting. It is an easy parent, giving high quality seedlings. Parentage is NN 32-2-3 (Flying x Godsend) X MESMERIZER.

I hope this list of favorite "parents" may inspire some of our young hybridizers to choose the remontan iris as their area of activity. There is now a good demand for reblooming iris and a plentiful palette of exciting colors to choose from.

## TO GO OR NOT TO GO

Rosalie Yerkes Figge

**THAT** was the sixty-four dollar question six years ago and again this year! Six years ago when so many of my AIS friends were going to England for the British Iris Society meetings, my children opposed the idea. I was 86 then, and I think they thought I was too old. I wanted to go, had even paid my registration fee—BUT a month after returning I would be facing the members of the Reblooming Iris Society as their newly elected President. Discretion took over, for once in my life, and I stayed home.

This year, my age was 92 and my offspring were still opposed. But my oldest granddaughter and family live not too far from where BIS meeting would be held, and I had not seen her in a couple of years. So I threw discretion to the wind and went and had a marvelous time. It was wonderful to see old friends. I met Anne Blanco-White some years ago when I was in England with a Genealogy Tour. I had played hooky one day and she graciously took me on a visit to someone's garden and then to Wisley.

It was also fun to meet and make new friends. I was so happy to meet Sidney Linnegar, the President of the British Iris Society. I have one of his books and I had heard so much about what a wonderful person he is. And Ray Jeffs, who is a walking encyclopedia on horticulture. About a dozen people came from the U.S., including Mary Brown, Claire Honkanen, RIS vice president, and Margaret and George Sutton. Margaret is our treasurer and they are the co-chairmen of the RIS Slide Program; also several persons from Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and France, and a whole raft from Italy, including the lovely Margaret Cameron Longo.

We stayed in the BIS headquarters hotel, the Holiday Inn in Bristol, and went a day early to recover from jet lag and to have more time to explore the town. The Bristol cathedral's graveyard revealed an interesting pattern of flowers on the graves, rather than just grass. Tree-like fuchsias brightened the area. Coaches (buses are for local city travel) drove on the left (the wrong side of the road for us) and were very comfortable. The first flower to greet us was what some consider to be a type of Iris-- a dear little blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium*) which added to the "at home" feeling. We envied their ability to grow gorgeous lupines (too hot here for many of us). Coral bells grew along the borders, and occasionally we saw jack-in-the-pulpits hiding among beautiful hybrid daisies and the heuchera. The SDBs were happily blooming from Chuck Chapman's Canadian Gardens: LITTLE FIRECRACKER ('97), CREAM PIXIE ('96), and BUTTERSCOTCH CARPET ('94). An AB: WALKER ROSS (Ross '98) was in flower. J. and V. Craig's WHITE WINE ('98) was an IB in bloom, and I think I was able to identify Paul Black's IB: SINISTER DESIRE ('98). T. T. Tamburg's Siberian seedling #SSTT657 was beginning to unfurl: purple falls with gold. In the background were some fascinating tree peonies and spectacular wide, high hedges clipped in a scalloped pattern.

BIS and AIS have much in common with how meetings are held, but there are also some differences. The first difference we ran into is that they did not give us a list of those attending, so that you can learn names and countries. This has many disadvantages, especially if the attendees are foreign to you and if you do not remember names very easily. One thing that reminded me of home was that the bloom season did not fit our tour time. The weather was very cold for us and the bloom (sometimes barely 50 degrees to start the day). But this was more than countered by the warmth of BIS members looking after their visitors.

As I said, we are not accustomed to cloudy days with what seemed forever-rain, then 5 minutes of clear, maybe a peek of sun, and then 15 to 20 minutes of drizzle to gully-washers! I stayed in the bus for two gardens and unfortunately, one was the Bartlett's. The mud puddles and rain that I could not face, delighted my 8-year-old great-grandson who was a champion puddle-splasher, and of course, it was nothing unusual for the stalwart British.

Most of the gardens we visited were commercial nurseries rather than private gardens, and they charged for the refreshments-- so count your blessings at our next convention. However, the variety of unfamiliar beautiful plants were a joy to see. Of course it was impossible for us to bring any home, which just about killed me! The catalogs are characteristic of the garden. For instance, HADSPEN GARDEN's was called a "PLAN". It had a modest brown-sugar color cover and a labeled map as the center page but no pictures. This garden was arranged by COLOR!! It was amazingly effective. Peach Walk, Double Yellow Border, Plum Grey Border, Violet Border, and Lily Pond Border (with a place to feed the fish!). Then the Curved Border that held the garden together was divided into small sections: Yellow (at the doorway), Orange, Red, Plum, Pink, Peach, Yellow. The catalog listed the various plants to be found in each specified section. On a warm sunny day it would have been heavenly to visit.

Two of the other gardens had beautiful glossy catalogs with pictures and descriptions: CLAIRE AUSTIN HANDBOOK OF HARDY PLANTS and KELWAYS. The former, in contrast to KELWAYS, did not give the names of the hybridizers, nor did it have as many irises. It was really a "Handbook" as the title indicated and included many kinds of plants and is well worth keeping for a reference. KELWAYS deals only with irises and peonies, and they also hybridize both. They list the Bartlett irises, and they have many of the good "oldies" from the U.S. It is difficult and expensive to ship irises abroad, so the gardens had very few U.S. introductions later than the 1990s. It was interesting to note that the heights were given in centimeters and while there were prices for singles, they featured groups of three rhizomes.

Another big difference was what their registration fee covered: It did not include the banquet as is the custom here, which caused confusion for some of us. However, we received a handsome leather (10"x 12") folder reinforced with "gold" corners. Gold lettering on the cover had the BIS logo as well as "80th Anniversary Convention" "Bristol 2002". Inside, the leather pockets held Bristol information; a pen and a large, lined writing pad. This memento was very impressive and one to treasure.

There were six "Lecturettes" the first night by well-known hybridizers from various countries. Accents (for us!), etc. would have been understood better if there had been microphones. But Tamburg's seedlings were GORGEOUS — such unusual colors! The Awards Banquet, the second night, was thrown into a tizzy at the last minute when the Italians arrived and two more tables had to be squeezed in! But the British handled it with their usual aplomb-- maybe they are experienced with this, because there was enough of the delicious meal for all. Again, we couldn't hear or understand the awards (no microphone) but Margaret Cameron Longo received something. We were honored to have her at our table. She was most gracious. I gather she is from Scotland, but lives in Italy. She, as well as many others, asked about Clarence. Our President really endeared himself over there six years ago and then again when he was a judge for the famous International Competition in Florence. We went to another room for the entertainment after the banquet.

It was on Shakespeare, and Mary and Cy Bartlett were absolutely fantastic and hilarious. We laughed until our sides hurt. I hope sometime they will be here and we can persuade them and the “powers that be” to have them give a repeat performance.

After this marvelous grand finale, we all went to bed knowing that the irisarians would be departing for foreign shores. My destination was not too far away-- my granddaughter's home in Cheltenham.

My happy dreams were disturbed at 2 a.m. I heard bells ringing and I was groping around in my sleep for the durned alarm clock, then the phone, - - I was so-o-o sleepy. Then Mary shook me, saying, “Rosalie, There's a fire! Get up! Here is your coat.” That pierced my consciousness! I grabbed my glasses and pocketbook, which are always by my bed. We made sure we had our keycards so, clad in nightgowns, coats, and slippers, we staggered into the hall and found everyone— adults and tots and babies in various stages of dress/undress with the bells clanging annoyingly and incessantly. A pleasant Englishman, an irisarian helped me down four flights of steps. Now I have a going-down leg and a going-up leg and the going-down leg had a real workout. We met the fireman in their helmets and slickers, carrying axes, etc. coming up the steps. It was a slow descent, but everyone was calm and helpful.

The wet cold ground was another shock as we walked around the side of the hotel. Someone gave me a seat in the covered bus waiting booth and the bleating fire engine was in front of us.. Mary's smoke-detecting throat alerted her, but we couldn't see any fire. Later we heard it was vandalism— someone had hit the fire alarm box in front of the hotel and had thrown a burning newspaper in the stairwell of the back area. Soon Margaret Sutton found us. She was barefoot, and we were all shivering partly from nervousness, but also from the COLD. Suddenly I heard them calling the room numbers and names of the occupants and realized they were taking roll, so Mary joined the crowd closer to the door so she could answer for us.

We were allowed to enter the hotel and the tired guests, practically sleep-walked as they were herded into the lift (elevator), load after load, by one of the dining room staff, asking if everyone was o.k. before closing the doors. Unfortunately, when our time came, I was wide awake, upset with a fast-beating heart, so when asked if we were all right, I popped up with “No, my throat is dry and I want some ice cream.” He didn't blink. “What kind?” he asked. “Chocolate,” I said, being a chocoholic. “What room number?” he asked. And soon there was a knock on our door and there was the biggest dish of ice cream I have ever seen. It was all Mary (who is lactose allergic!) and I could do to finish it.

I think Mary was soon asleep, but I lay there mentally thanking Claire Barr for insisting that our rooms be on the lowest floor possible when we traveled together and I still followed her rule. I also remembered that a dear friend had been on the 12th floor when there was a hotel fire and she slipped on the steps and had to be hospitalized — and never returned home! The thoughts marched through my mind of all the complications for BIS. Also I remembered the big ocean between me and my daughters, and I didn't want my granddaughter to bear any possible repercussions if anything bad happened to me, since there had been no state-side enthusiasm over my trip(!) All this passed through my throbbing head quicker than it took to write this. So with great care and deliberation I soothed my blood pressure, thinking calming thoughts and used isometric exercises to relax my trembling bones! I'm glad to say that now it seems like a “tempest in a teapot” but I will still want the lowest floor in a hotel — and this is one BIS experience that AIS need not copy!

These few days were just a taste of England. The country is endowed with spectacular cathedrals that abound with history and many fabulous gardens, so unbelievable it is like an Eden on Earth. Luckily my granddaughter is also a garden-enthusiast so, with her touring expertise, I was able to sample more of this fairyland, sometimes in the rain.. Rain! Aha! Here is part of the reason for their uniqueness and beauty. There had to be some good results for all that rain and air-moisture we slogged through! Even with the rain and a fire scare, the 80th Convention was made more than worthwhile by the graciousness of our British friends. I was glad that I had come and had my faith in the goodness of people reinforced.



Attendees at the 2002 BIS Convention  
Mary Bartlett George and Margaret Sutton Cy Bartlett

## REBLOOMERS IN THE AWARDS

Mesmerizer  
Jurassic Park  
Little Blue Eyes

2002 Dykes Medal  
John C. Wister Medal  
Cook-Douglas Medal

Award of Merit

Forever Blue (Chapman 97) SDB

### *Honorable Mention*

October Sky (Lauer 99)  
Blue Fin (Sutton 98)  
Ziggy (Keyser 97)  
Double Dribble (Ghio 99)  
Return Address (Ghio 99)  
Bolder Boulder (Magee 99)

Violet Turner (Lauer 99)  
Bye Bye Blackbird (Sutton 96)  
Polish Princess (Cadd 99)  
Concertina (Sutton 99) IB  
Pink Cadillac (Sutton 99) BB  
Wizard's Return (Tasco 97) SDB



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