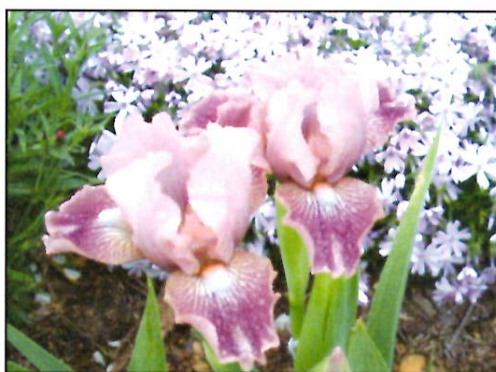


# THE REBLOOMING IRIS RECORDER

Spring 2004 VOLUME 63



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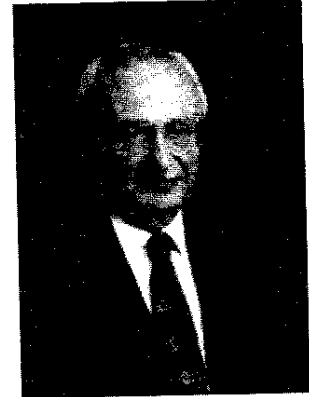
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## President's Message

As I sit down to write this message the daffodils are starting to bloom, and the song birds are retuning—and that means I am tardy in getting it written. Part of my delay in writing it has been caused by the flu, which is taking a terribly long time to abate. But part of my delay is probably caused by the fact that I have to discuss a subject that is one of my least favorite topics in this whole world: Bylaws.

Several years ago, when Mrs. Figge was president of RIS, she detected many defects in the bylaws and appointed a committee to assist her in rewriting them. She appointed Sterling Innerst and me to the committee. Both Sterling and I share a congenital aversion to bylaws, and would not have agreed to do it for any man or woman except Rosalie Figge. We did our duty, including one hour and a half session on a conference call at 11:00 pm. Mrs. Figge produced what seemed to me an excellent set of bylaws. They were submitted to the membership and adopted.



Subsequently, in 2000, a new set of bylaws had to be written to include provisions required for RIS to qualify as a tax-exempt organization. These proposed bylaws were published in the Fall 2000 *Recorder*, and adopted in 2001. Unfortunately, the published bylaws contain a number of errors. For example, in one section they provide for only four directors, and then list five directorships. (We actually have six directors). Article III, Section 2, 3, 4 and 5 appear twice. There are several errors in paragraph identification, some misspellings, and a few other problems.

My dear friend and mentor, Mrs. Figge, almost had me convinced that we were going to have to rewrite the bylaws. But then, almost miraculously, she discovered that that all of the errors were typographical and could be corrected without formal revision. She worked with Nancy Price, our talented web designer, to make the corrections and you will now find the bylaws with all of the typos corrected at our web site: <http://www.rebloomngiris.com/index.htm>.

Ever since I have been a member of the RIS we have had one recurrent administrative problem. That problem is keeping track of when terms of office of officers and directors expire, getting nominations published at the proper time, and holding timely elections to fill positions when terms expire. As a means of trying to solve that problem, I am going to work with our editor and web designer to make sure that the term expiration dates for all officers and directors are published in each issue of the *Recorder* and on our official web site.

I hope you have a nice spring, and look forward to seeing many of you in Fresno in a few weeks.

Clarence Mahan

## Editor's Message

As I wrote this, I noticed a strange feeling in my legs. Then I remembered, yesterday was nice enough to weed. Even though I told myself that it was time to quit or I would surely pay, I was enjoying the sunshine so much. We had a record setting winter here, (10<sup>th</sup> for snowfall since they started keeping records, and its not April 15 yet!) All of that nice white mulch saw the irises through and the reticulates are strutting their stuff.

Yesterday I found my very first germinates in the fridge, so its finally official, I'm a hybridizer! Setting pods is one thing, but if you can't get the darn things to germinate what good is it? I am encouraged that the first germinates are from a cross that I made this fall and put into the fridge green- (Rosalie Figge x About Town.) I thought that I had destroyed this cross when I managed to break off the pod with the garbage can that was intended to protect it from the frost. By May, if all goes well, I may be trying to figure out where to put 3000 4" pots.

Hopefully this issue makes it out in time for the convention in Fresno. This convention is sure to be a treat for Reblooming enthusiasts with both Suttons and Superstition on the tour. The only thing missing will be Rosalie, which tears at my heart. I am certain though that she will regain her strength and be right back into the swing of things by St Louis.

Colleen Modra will be the speaker at the RIS general meeting. It will be most interesting to get a perspective from Australia, we are lucky to have Colleen! An introduction for Colleen follows.

Thank you to everyone that sent in articles for this issue. I'm calling this editor's message good, as I wrote way too much last issue. I don't mind putting everything together, but I'm discovering that asking for articles is not my strong suit. In case you are wondering, this is a hint. Here's wishing everyone a wonderful bloom season for 2004!



Cover: Center: Roberts seedling 96-97A (Tropical Sun x Widdershins)  
Clockwise from left top corner:  
Aitken seedling 98T15RE (Excellency x Romantic Evening)  
Wilkerson seedling 1024-1RE- Radiant Bliss (Earl of Essex x Hot Streak)  
Aitken MTB seedling 00M6RE (Coral Charmer x Pele)  
Lauer seedling (Clarence x Mariposa Skies)  
Hill SDB Seedling - Sweethearts Again (Caution Sign x Chanted)  
Sutton Seedling  
Stanek Seedlings left- 89-34 (Pink Attraction x Christa)  
right 89-120 (Queen Dorothy x Instructor)

Correction: On last issue the color on Mariposa Autumn was reproduced more red than it should have been. Our apologies for the confusion.



**Guest Speaker for the 2004 RIS General Meeting**  
**COLLEEN MODRA**

Colleen has been growing irises in South Australia for almost 20 years. After cleaning out an old overgrown garden she discovered irises growing. On blooming, these turned out to be blue, white and PINK. Didn't know there was a pink one. After moving to another house she bought a garden magazine which had half price specials on irises, so some were ordered. With the order came the catalogue!!!!!! (Barry Blyth's to be exact). Instant severe irises virus, for which we all know, there is no cure and the only treatment is the continued purchase of new irises.

In 1996 Colleen and her husband Les moved from the northern suburbs of Adelaide to a 5 acre property in the Adelaide Hills where the climate is cooler and wetter, by Adelaide standards. They had the idea of one day starting an iris nursery.

However in 1998 the owner of a small iris nursery asked them if they would like to take over his business as he was moving to another job in Melbourne. So despite recently building a house and giving birth to a delightfully unexpected child, they agreed to take over Impressive Irises. Les left his job as a spray painter and took on the job of moving all the stock to their property. Colleen continued to work as an account manager selling biotechnology research products. While there is enough work for both of them in the business, "irises don't pay mortgages" so Colleen balances working full time with the office business and hybridizing end of things. Les describes his job as "she points, I dig". He does all the stock management and agricultural field shows. Actually, the agreement is - Colleen doesn't drive the tractor and Les doesn't turn on the computer. Parenting young Rachael is a shared joy.

The mild Australian climate is good for rebloomers and this, coupled with their emphasis on the drier rural areas, has lead to an increasing interest in Spuria and reblooming Bearded Iris.

The use of a web site ([www.impressiveirises.com.au](http://www.impressiveirises.com.au)) has seen the beginnings of an export business, with orders to USA, United Kingdom and Russia.

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## **Substance in Iris**

By Keith Chadwick

As I was walking by a group of iris people who were looking at one of my seedlings, one of the group asked me what I thought of the iris.

"It is a fly away" was my reply. I got a lot of puzzled looks. They didn't know what a fly away was. I explained that a flyaway was an iris that had no substance and we pulled them and they flew away to the compost pile.

My first experience with substance came on a hot July day when I was looking at blooms on reblooming iris. They would open in the morning and be wilted by evening. But look at 'Cantina' (Byers 89). It's

bloom has lasted three days. Feel the thickness of the flower petal. It is like cardboard. It has a lot of substance. That's it, substance makes the blooms last longer. Substance is important especially in hot weather.

Not many irises that rebloom have much substance. In addition to 'Cantina', we like 'Total Recall', 'Rosalie Figge', 'Her Royal Highness' and 'Silver Dividends'.

How do we measure substance? We feel the flower petal to see how thick it is. If the falls are straight out and not drooping, it shows more substance. If it flutters in a slight breeze, it lacks substance.

Another way is to measure the thickness of the petal with a thickness gage. .010 thousands of an inch would be little substance. .020 to .045 thousands of an inch shows substance. .045 is the thickest we have found.

There are other considerations:

When a bloom first opens it shows more substance.

Cool weather helps substance

Reset irises have more substance than crowded iris

Irises that are dry and hurting for water have less substance

Lack of fertilizer may decrease substance

Light colored iris absorb less heat and may retain their substance

Even though substance is one of the criteria for judging iris, I feel that many times it is overlooked and it should not be.

### 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)

## **The Saga of 97-96A, Wives, and Sharin' Dreams**

**By  
Bill Burleson**

"I want to tell you about hero hybridizers and growers that helped my iris efforts" - B. Burleson, spring 2003 issue The Reblooming Iris Recorder

When I typed that sentence I let my fingers overload the capacity of a decade's worth of "Recorder" issues. The truth is I have a lot of heroes and get lots of help the easy way. I just ask. We the flower people are that way and the real heroes are exactly like us. A single page allows me to address one pleasant surprise (there are and have been many) from one hybridizer.

I do not recall how I first crossed paths with Merle Roberts and his backyard. I do recall my first viewing of his seedling 97-96A and its parents (Tropical Sun x Widdershins). Most likely I found Merle and his web site surfing or on the old iris-talk Yahoo list. Regardless, I had long held affection for blooms with metallic "edged" or "picoted" margins. I'd played with these in daylilies at length but the iris world and me still seemed to be stumblin' around lookin' for 'em. Even today they are not a very prominent feature in irises nor to my knowledge do others exist in rebloomers. Finding that web page for me was like gittin' a glimpse through the pearly gates. That page is no longer up and remains sorely missed. It provided great no nonsense insight into what one might expect crossing the parents he was working with at the time.

My interest and questions concerning 97-96A and from whence its metallic edge came yielded the source of the edge (Widdershins) and an offer to allow me to trial the seedling. 'Widdershins' had already received a glowing report from the respected hybridizer, Walter Moores, who was working in a climate similar to mine.

Elation erupted when I opened that package and it contained both 97-96A and Widdershins. Another serious hybridizer who both trialed seedlings and shared had emerged. Perhaps just as well known as my respect for sharing regardless of reason, is my penchant for a non-coddling approach to iris gardening and he still sent them. I did not know whether to think him foolish, fearless or seeking a trying test of his hybridizing efforts. By the way, 'Widdershins' photos can still be viewed at Merle's old web site <http://www.televar.com/~irisbuff/>, a deserving cultivar in its own right.

Skippin' some details between a fall planting, scraggly spring stalks attributed to planting stress and the following September, a rebloom stalk emerged and bloomed. The bloom was on a par in form and substance with any modern iris and the stalk heavy in construction and strong. More exciting here for me was the expression of that rare metallic edge. In truth I pretty much wrote that single initial rebloom stalk off as one of those sometimes occurring flukes in the iris world.

Five more rebloom stalks later, Merle had presented the secret center of the iris universe and



the reblooming iris community with a modern iris bloom in a color family heretofore unavailable that easily passed being a fluke. That's reason enough for sharing.... Then of course there is that awe inspiring metallic edge, and the warm fuzzy glow that only real iris people know.

Merle gained knowledge that at least in one place, he had something special... a rebloomer. Me? I got the promise: the promise of things yet to come, the awe, the warm fuzzy glow. I got seeds from crosses with other rebloomers. I got plans. I can't wait to cross it with Moores' fast growing Lemonade Springs. And, I got anticipation. I can't wait to smear 97-96A new colored, strong stalked pollen across so many things.

As a point in passing, 97-96A may turn out to be the most expensive iris ever to arrive here. I must have spent a million on irises with descriptions that used the words metallic, gold, silver, edge, rim, and/or rebloom... I called this investing. My wife? She calls me doin' such things blowing grocery money on dreams. Being the writer, I got the last word though.... It's now referred to as investing in the sharing of dreams. Maybe now I can get her to use the boy's tuition money to pay for just a few more.

## Check out the new RIS webpage

[www.rebloomingiris.com](http://www.rebloomingiris.com)

There is a gallery, rebloom reports, a list of the officers, cultural information and much, much more!

We will post additional photos of some of the irises mentioned in the articles on the site.

Many thanks to our wonderful webmaster-Nancy Price. She has done a terrific job!



*Crouching like cats,  
they purred amid layers of kimono  
swirling around them  
as though they were bathing  
in a mountain pool with irises  
growing in the silken sunlit water.  
Or poised like porcelain vases,  
slender, erect and tall... 1.*

1. From Cathy Song's "Beauty and Sadness," a poem included in the latest edition of *The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry*. Song's words are describing the women who posed for the great woodblock print artist Utamaro.

Original artwork by Christy Hensler

## Seedlings from Lauer's Flowers

By Larry Lauer

I've been interested in Reblooming irises ever since I learned about them, shortly after I was introduced to the iris world by Jim McWirter. Through him, I met Ben Hager and Sid Dubose and was hooked.

I was asked to write a small article on a Reblooming seedling of mine that I thought was good. To find a good parent is half the battle. I look for a quality plant with vigor, good bud count and modern form. This is most important to bring rebloomers to the same level of oncurs.

In the spring of 2000 I made a cross of 'Clarence' and 'Mariposa Autumn.' I planted the seeds that fall, put the plants in the field that summer, and by October three had bloom stalks. All three bloomed and I was thrilled with what I saw. Two were on tall stalks, the other was a bit short but had good form and bud count. They were all plicatas, one was almost solid violet-purple with white plicata markings around the beard, another was a white ground with light violet markings on the edge of the falls and more pronounced markings on the standards. I couldn't wait for the spring bloom.

That spring, their first, most of the cross bloomed. All were different shades of light violet to dark purple violet plicatas. I marked a good number of reselects to move for further use and then waited for fall before moving anything. I also made a number of crosses with them or to them. That fall there were 19 rebloomers of the 39 seedlings from that cross. Needless to say, I moved all of them for further evaluation.

The following year, using one of those seedlings, I made a cross with 'Fancy Dress,' planted them in the field last spring and three bloomed that fall, all looking nice. One was almost pure white with luminata markings.

As you can probably guess, I'll be using them a lot this spring. As I write this in early March, seven of those seedlings are now in bloom.

## JULY 2003 KOREAN WAR COMMEMORATION VISIT

by Charles Brown

I received a phone call on Friday evening the 19<sup>th</sup> of July asking if I would return to Korea to represent the veterans of the Korean War for the Commemoration of the signing of the Armistice in 1953. If I would accept, I was to be at DFW on Tuesday morning the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July to leave. A fellow veteran from Arlington, Texas was also going and we were to be the U.S. representatives at the ceremonies. I talked it over with Donna, my wife, and she said O K go. I returned the call to accept and did a rush job to pack. I had to check to see if my passport was still valid and at the same time I was selling a car that day.

Everything fell into place by Monday and I arrived at DFW at 0900 on Tuesday. Channel 8, WFAA was there and interviewing Charles Smith, who was going with me. We were informed that we would given the money for our tickets when we got to Korea. I had been a last minute replacement for Ed Buckman who had had surgery the week before and his doctors wouldn't allow him to travel that distance. My ticket was

round trip but with no return flight due to the last minute change. I was told that the Korean government would correct that after we arrived. The flight from DFW was non-stop, 14 hours. It was not anything like my first visit to Korea in 1951. On that trip it took 14 days on a troop ship. We arrived at Incheon International about 5:00 PM their time on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. We had lost a day on the trip over. There were military personnel there to get us processed and then our special escort arrived and put us on a bus for our hotel in Seoul.

It is about 25 miles from Incheon to Seoul, but almost an hour's drive. The traffic makes Dallas gridlock seem tame. There was bumper to bumper traffic at 50 miles per hour which slowed to creeping along as we came into the city. We arrived at the hotel about 7:30, checked in, and went to bed. We were beat and the jet lag was in full swing.

Thursday was an off day with veterans arriving from the 21 different countries that served during the war. Most of the countries had only the two representatives sponsored by the Korean government, but Belgium, New Zealand, and England sent large contingents of veterans. Their countries sponsored the extras. At several other hotels, there were about 1000 American vets who had been sponsored by several of the veterans organizations through the VFW and American Legion.

Friday morning we started with a big breakfast and then got on the busses at 8:00 AM. We were taken to the Korean War Veterans Cemetery to a Wreath presentation. Each of the two representatives from the 21 countries went forward to present the wreathes at the Korean Tomb of the Unknown. We left the cemetery and went directly to the Korean War Memorial Museum. All the vets were impressed with the museum. It has mock representation of the events of the war and static displays of different aircraft, tanks and other military vehicles.

We returned to the hotel and were informed that we would be dining at the ambassador's table at the banquet that night and afterward would receive the Ambassador of Freedom Medal from the Korean government. We also found out that Henry Kissinger would be at our table that night if his aircraft arrived in time.

The busses took us to the banquet and there were about 1500 veterans, some with families. The banquet was sponsored by the Korean USO. We had a very good meal and were welcomed by the Korean representative and the U.S. Commander of Forces. Mr. Kissinger arrived a little late, very tired from the flight. He sat and talked with us for a few minutes then went on stage to make a short speech. He was escorted directly from the stage back out to a vehicle and off to the embassy to rest.

The next day, Saturday, we had a break. Charles Smith and I went shopping through the open shops in Seoul. It got quite warm and by the time we returned to the hotel, we were both beat. It had been 50 years since we ran up and down the hills and mountains there and time has made a difference.

Sunday was the big day. It was the 27<sup>th</sup> of July, 50 years since the signing of the armistice. We started very early and off we went to Panmunjon. It started raining, typical of Korean weather. There were several speeches and then they unveiled the memorial plaque to the 21 nations that served in Korea. It is on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel in the DMZ. We returned to our busses and headed back to the Korean War Museum for the unveiling of the new war memorial.

Charles and I were given large Pink Rosettes and seated in the VIP section. We were informed that we

would be honored and also we would unveil the U.S. portion of the memorial. When the ceremonies started there were several speeches and then women of the Korean Army presented fresh floral wreaths to each of the representatives of the 21 nations. The wreaths were the size of large horse collars and quite heavy. It was raining and the more water the flowers collected, the heavier they got.

They issued plastic rain coats, but with the rain, the heat, and the rain coats, it was just as wet inside as out. The ceremony continued and Charles Smith and I were led to the U.S. column where it was draped in white nylon. There was a military cannon just behind us as we waited for the signal to pull on the ropes to do the unveiling. When all the nations were in place, they gave a signal and we pulled. The cannon behind us was fired and we both jumped hanging on to the drape. The wet nylon did not want to give and the Korean army guide grabbed and helped pull. The veil finally came down. We returned to our seats and the President of South Korea made the rounds of the memorial, then we were invited to lunch with him. (All 1000 veterans) The lunch was served at the memorial in a four story building and we had all the floors full.

After lunch, we returned to the hotel to change and get ready for the closing ceremony. We boarded the busses at 5:30 and went to the military base football field. Of course, with the rain all day, the grounds were mushy grass and mud. They had canopies and chairs for us. The 21 countries were presented wreaths honoring their casualties and a piper played during the proceedings. Mr. Kissinger made a short speech. They then had a 21 gun salute for the casualties and at 2030 hours, the same time that the firing ended, they played taps. There were few dry eyes in the vets.



Monday morning, the last day we were to be there, the escorts were trying to get everyone ready for their departure planes. I still didn't have a return seat. The young lady that was our escort spent several hours on the phone and about noon, she called and said I was booked on the same flight as Charles Smith, in the last seat on the aircraft. That day, the Korean government representative came to the hotel and presented each of the 21 countries with a commemoration plaque. It was very heavy and was about 20 by 30 inches in size. We were to bring them back to our countries for all the veterans of the Korean War. The plaque, boxed and in gold wrap was larger than my carry on bag. The Korean Air let me take it aboard and I brought it back to Dallas. I displayed the plaque to the Korean War Veterans Association (Sam Johnson Chapter #270). It was decided that we would try to make arrangements to present the plaque to the President of the U.S.... to be placed at the Korean War Memorial in Washington D.C.

The trip and return to a modern Korea was very moving. When I left, it was mud and dust, no cities, Seoul was in ruins, and Inchon was a few tents. Now Seoul has a population of 12 million and Inchon has one million. There are modern highways, expressways, toll roads, and a tremendous bus and rail transportation system. Korea is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest industrial complex in the far east and everyone has an education.

It was a great honor to be selected to represent the U.S. veterans and the United States.

## Fall 2003, Winterberry Gardens Rebloom Report in Zone 6

By Ginny Spoon

The 2003 AIS National Convention guest beds provided a delightful assortment of new rebloomers to evaluate for our zones 6 and 7 in Region 4. The ones that rebloomed from the three northern guest gardens were: AGAIN AND AGAIN (Innerst 1999), yellow with white beards, this one rebloomed at least three times during the season. APOLLO S ROBE (R. Carter 2003), hybridized by one of C&P's youth members, this iris is an unusual color with lavender standards and golden yellow falls. AUTUMN IVORY BB (G. Spoon 2001) ivory white with heavy substance kept this one reblooming for a long time in late September and October. AUTUMN JOY (D. Spoon 2001) this one caught the eye of convention guests during the spring bloom but it rebloomed again in October. BOLDER BOULDER (Magee 2000) is a gray-blue neglecta similar to BEST BET, but it reblooms early enough to be enjoyed in zone 6. CHRISTIANE ELIZABETH (Mahan 2001) a tall, lovely blue with white blaze and beards.

DAUGHTER OF STARS (D. Spoon 2001), this purple bitone luminata with its large flowers rebloomed in many gardens this fall. Several Region 4 members reported they had at least five show worthy stalks on their fall clump of DAUGHTER OF STARS. DAYS OF SUMMER (Stanek 2002) is a nice yellow that won best of section in our fall Regional show in Winchester. DOUBLE YOUR FUN (Aitken 2000) an IB, rebloomed several times during the season and is an unusual color with pearl, flushed violet in the center of the standards, and yellow falls. DOUBLEDAY (Sutton 2001) is a lovely yellow with a white blaze. LILLA (Spoon 2000) a medium yellow rebloomed well in the gardens and for some of our Region 4 members.

MARIPOSA AUTUMN (Tasco 1999) a rosy violet plicata over white ground was gorgeous at the Lord Fairfax Campus last fall. The dark purple-black MIDSUMMER S NIGHT DREAM (Baumunk 1999) an IB, was a good rebloomer in all the gardens in which it was grown. OVER AND OVER (Innerst 2001) white trimmed lavender, rebloomed several times. PEACH PARASOL (Spoon 1997), a BB, sent up quite a few nice, wide branched rebloom stalks. SUGAR SNAPS (Pinegar 1999) an IB with pinkish orange standards and yellow orange falls rebloomed at Winterberry Gardens. ELEGANT LASS (J&V Craig 2002) was a nice addition to the border bearded class, and with its white standards and lavender blue falls it was lovely. HAKUNA MATATA (Cadd 2000) was an arilbred that was showy and rebloomed in July at Lord Fairfax.

MIDSUMMER S EVE (Spoon 1999) a BB, and CONSTANT COMPANION (Marsh 1995) an IB, were the reblooming champions of our garden with both of them reblooming for at least four months. We have used MIDSUMMER S EVE to cross for other multiple rebloomers and have gotten some good seedlings. One of our favorites is a cross out of MIDSUMMER S EVE X FANCY WOMAN, registered as TWIGGY, that is a border bearded with flared and ruffled falls. It is an apricot orange with darker venation. TWIGGY rebloomed during three different months this year, and was trying to put up another stalk when our early November freeze stopped it.

Of the small rebloomers, ROSALIE LOVING (Spoon 2003) an SDB, we thought was the most beautiful in our garden with its wide ruffled falls and glowing yellow highlights, red maroon spot and orange beards. It rebloomed for us in October and November. PRINCE LOLLIPOP (Spoon 2002), an SDB, took the best specimen in the fall Regional show in Winchester this past October with DAYS OF SUMMER (Stanek) as runner-up. HILDA S GIFT (Spoon 2002) an MDB, was the most prolific as it was covered with bright yellow blossoms for several months and still sent up stalks until the hard freeze in November. PRINCE PELE (Spoon 2001) an SDB, was the most colorful with its glowing golden flowers competing with the *Sternbergia lutea* the fall blooming crocus-like bulbs we have in our iris beds.

# Rebloom Report, 2003

By Richard C. Richards

This is my usual annual report of rebloom (or off-season bloom) in my two small gardens in southern California, USDA region 9 or thereabouts. The reports start on January 1 of each year, and end, logically enough, on December 31, with some time out for spring. This is a convenient way to divide a year that is otherwise pretty continuous. More about that later.

Rebloom is listed by month. I simply go out into either garden several times a month and note what is blooming. If a variety starts blooming on the last day of the month, it is credited with rebloom in that month, the same as if it had bloomed all month. Any attempt to convey any more precision seems to involve more detail and complexity, and hence length, than I am willing to support.

**January:** Amethyst Winter, Autumn Circus, Autumn Clouds, Bernice's Legacy, Cease-Fire, Competition, Lichen, Low Ho Silver (IB), Misty Twilight, Pure As Gold, Sea Fluff, Shoot the Moon, Solstice, Splash O' Wine.

**February:** Amethyst Winter, Autumn Circus, Autumn Clouds, Bess Bergen, Lichen, Misty Twilight, Pure As Gold, Sea World, Solstice, Three Seasons.

**March 1-15:** Autumn Clouds, Bess Bergen, Lichen, Three Seasons.

**June 15-30:** Artistic Gold, Golden Immortal, Harvest of Memories, Low Ho Silver (still IB), Mariposa Skies, Orchid Re-Sprite (PCI), Over and Over, Pure As Gold, Reiterate, Renown, Solstice, Sunny Disposition.

**July:** Again and Again, All American, Artistic Gold, Autumn Circus, Bernice's Legacy, Canary Delight, Cayenne Capers, Harvest of Memories, Irish Spring, Lemon Reflection, Mariposa Skies, Over and Over, Pure As Gold, Reiterate, Renown, Rosalie Figge, Sea World, Sunny Disposition, Welcome Discovery.

**August:** Amethyst Winter, Artistic Gold, Canary Delight, Eggnog, Irish Spring, Lichen, Misty Twilight, My Friend Jonathan, Pearls of Autumn, Rosalie Figge, Sea World, Sunny Disposition, Twice Delightful, Welcome Discovery.

**September:** Artistic Gold, Autumn Circus, Deborah Dances, Eggnog, Harvest of Memories, Lichen, Low Ho Silver (IB), Misty Twilight, My Friend Jonathan, Over and Over, Renown, Sea World.

**October:** Amethyst Winter, Canary Delight, Cayenne Capers, Doublemint, Eggnog, Irish Tune, Lichen, Low Ho Silver, My Friend Jonathan, Over and Over, Pearls of Autumn, Renown, Sea World, Sierra Mist, Spring Jade, Welcome Discovery.

**November:** Amethyst Winter, Aspen, Autumn Clouds, Blatant, Canary Delight, Cayenne Capers, Cease-Fire, Deborah Dances, Doublemint, Eggnog, Irish Tune, Lichen, Low Ho Silver (Ho Hum), Pleasant Peasant, Pure As Gold, Renown, Sea World, Sierra Mist, Spring



Jade, Twice Delightful, Welcome Discovery.

**December:** Amethyst Winter, Aspen, Autumn Clouds, Bernice's Legacy, Bess Bergen, Canary Delight, Cease-Fire, Lichen, Low Ho Silver (no comment), Mariposa Skies, My Friend Jonathan, Pearls of Autumn, Pure As Gold, Renown, Sea World, Sierra Mist, Soap Opera, Spring Jade, Sunny Disposition, Twice Delightful, Welcome Discovery.

As you can see, a number of varieties rebloom extensively in this winter-mild climate. In past reports I have praised many of them. This year I am impressed by two irises.

The first is 'Canary Delight'. My wife wanted this iris, and I got it for her. It proved to be a great choice. I don't know whether to call it a bicolor or a bitone. It seems to have pale yellow standards here, and rich yellow falls, but the standards are almost white. It bloomed extensively off-season. Shorter stalks, but that might be a function of the extremely raised bed I am growing it in. The bed is four feet high.

The only complaint I have about 'Canary Delight' is its aroma, similar to a collision between a skunk and a manure truck. My wife in November cut a stalk and brought it in for an arrangement, and moved the arrangement out to the patio almost immediately, to be enjoyed behind a protective layer of glass. 'Canary Delight' belongs on the Top Ten List of malodorous irises of all times.

The second great performer is 'Welcome Discovery.' It is a golden yellow that blooms and blooms and blooms. The stalks are not sensational, but it is such a willing rebloomer. If you want tall stalks with wide branching, consider 'Autumn Clouds.' If you want an iris that will bloom its heart out, 'Welcome Discovery' is one such iris, at least in this mild climate.

Now let me consider a sheet of paper called the Record of Iris Rebloom, which accompanied the latest Reblooming Recorder. As I looked it over, it punched me in the funny bone, which in my case is in my head. It ended with month 12 (December, I presume), and the admonition that when I feel I have no more rebloom, send the report to my area director. As you can see from the listing of rebloom above, my problem is not to determine when rebloom stops, but to distinguish it from normal spring bloom. The rebloom goes on into January, February, and March, and somewhere along the way becomes normal spring bloom. The form in question had no spaces for January, February, and March. I guess it is hard for most of the country to imagine iris bloom every day of the year, but that is what I have had for over a decade.

My problem is to determine when to declare the start of spring. Stoking up my courage, I have decided that here in southern California, spring starts at 12:00.01 AM on March 16. Also, I will count no iris as a rebloomer unless it blooms during the period of 12:00.01 AM on March 16 and 12:00.01 AM on June 16 (when summer starts), and then at some time outside that period. That way I avoid counting the earlier bloomers, like 'Lemon Custard,' which always blooms magnificently in late February or early March, and rarely at any other time, or the late bloomers, which bloom only in late June or early July, but not during the period I have determined to be spring.

My nonconformistic garden does not fit the form entitled Record of Iris Bloom. I knew something like this would happen when we elected an action-hero movie star as Governor of the State of California. We also got vicious fires and floods at the same time. That is the price we pay for living in the land of perpetual drought, where what little annual rain we get falls in one big storm and washes significant segments of our state out to sea. Or at least that is the best way to explain our zip codes, which change so often we refer to them as the zip codes du jour.

Given a little watering all summer and most of the winter, however, the rebloomers sure love it here. So do the weeds.

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### What Members of the Triple R Reblooming Robin Are Writing

*Excerpts from the Robin*

Richard Richards (California): My quixotic quest for a green iris produced some promising seedlings this spring, though nothing to turn cartwheels over. I would send pictures, but so far I cannot capture the colors, either on standard film (they always look dirty yellow) or with a digital camera.... I am learning a lot about the elusive color. Irises can look very green in early morning and late afternoon, and washed out yellow at noon. Cooler weather makes for a greener appearance. And it is very hard to get away from the yellow influence in hybridizing...for a green. I am not sure how to do that, but crossing with pale blues is producing some promising results. I am not holding my breath at this point, but I am not contemplating suicide either. When I started this crazy green project, no one said it would be easy.

Mike Locatell (Virginia): The majority of the excitement during bloom season centered around two of Lloyd's seedlings planted two years ago. 00 32C (Pinkness X Godsend) contributed one seedling with apricot pink coloring and shrimp beards ending in lavender blue horns. Flower size was not overly large, but the combination was quite pleasing. SS 120 was real satisfying, particularly for Lloyd. He has been working for clean whites with dark blue beards and this seedling seemed to reflect this aim. Stalks were sturdy despite the weather and there were plenty of flowers over a two-week period.

Lloyd Zurbrigg (Virginia): Perhaps some of you may be interested in the parentages [of two seedlings]. SS 120 is really white, with really blue beards. I was first interested in a full sibling, SS 119, which is a white with pale blue beards-too pale for introduction. The pod parent is from (Northward Ho x sib. to Mary Estelle) X (Renown x Mesmerizer). (Only the sib. to 'Mary Estelle' has the blue beards on near white.) The pollen parent is: (Renown x Mesmerizer) X ((sib. to Renown x Northward Ho) x Mesmerizer). It would seem that the white with red-tangerine beards must have some affinity for the blue beards of KK 120 and KK 119! Any suggestions?

The KK 14 cross is LURID X V 70-6-4. [The seedling] V 70-6-4 is: (Sprightly Air x Trumpet Concerto) X ANNE BOLEYN. [The seedling I selected from the KK 14 cross] is a yellow/blue bicolor with large flounces and rebloom. Its stalks are not always strong, but when it is good, it is lovely. Just a breeder, of course, but [it is] both a space ager and a rebloomer.

Betty Wilkerson (Kentucky): I've one experiment in progress. I've found that 8 oz. Styrofoam cups will fit perfectly into a hole dug with a bulb planter. With cross number 1806, I placed one seed per cup and one cup per hole. The plan is to pop these out of the cup once the seedlings are an inch or so and place them back into the holes. This should diminish root damage and I'm hoping to get a bit more of a jump on plant development since the roots will not be disturbed. The goal is either get fall bloom (2004) or, at least, a high percentage of 2005 spring bloom. I'd like to see 24 clumps in bloom in 2005!

In effect, they are planted in the place where they will grow, a prime spot in the garden. I check regularly to be sure the drain holes don't become blocked. The cups will prevent any drift or possible loss of seed in the soil. Space will be conserved, also, since I can remove the cups that don't have sprouts and use the space for a viable transplant. Then I will keep a soaker hose on the row and make sure they don't dry out during the summer....

Tim Stanek (Iowa): I have found that it is a good indication that if an iris [seedling] blooms for the first time in the fall that it will be a rebloomer. That is to say that the plant has reached its physiological or blooming maturity to initiate bloom which hopefully will arise at any time of the year conditions are right. My first reblooming introduction, 'Aunt Mary' (Stanek 2000), bloomed for the first time in the fall of its maiden year. I believe that the plants were just not big or mature enough to bloom that past spring.

Dana Brown (Texas): [In response to a request from Tim Stanek for recommendations on a digital camera.] We really enjoy ours [digital cameras]-can't imagine iris season without them. There are so many options available now. I knew I wanted a good amount of optical zoom. Our first digital camera had 14X and I didn't want to settle for 3X, which seemed to be the norm. We found a nice FUJI with 6X and I am glad we held out. Now they have an Olympus with 10X. Things are changing faster than I can keep up with them.

Rick Tasco (California): The convention guests are growing magnificently and should put on a good show this spring.... For those of you who are coming, our garden, because of our beautiful foothill location at 1,250' elevation, will be the latest in bloom, being about 7-10 days behind the other 10 gardens, which are all located down in the great San Joaquin Valley. Because of our location, we were given many more medians and arilbreds than the other gardens. We also still have almost 300 E, EM and M tall. If we have a typical spring we should have early tall and be at or just past peak for the IBs and ABs with some bloom left on the dwarfs. Remember, when the leaves are brown and the sky is gray do some *California Dreamin'*.

John I. Jones (California): My most consistent rebloomers are TOTAL RECALL and ST. PETERSBURG. When Joanne and I were married on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 1998, I was able to bring in a stalk of TOTAL RECALL to give to her in the ceremony.

Clarence Mahan (Virginia): 'Vanishing Act' appears to be a lovely flower. I really like the name.... I also like the parentage of 'Vanishing Act.' There is still much potential in 'Laced Cotton' for hybridizers to exploit. Of course, with 'Renown' as its pollen parent, 'Vanishing Act' is a grandchild of 'Suky.' How could I not like such an iris? 'Renown' and 'Suky' both tend to be good parents for reblooming seedlings. Breeding irises is always full of surprises. 'Violet Music' and 'Suky' are siblings. 'Violet Music' reblooms dependably. 'Suky' will infrequently rebloom in ideal climates. And yet I never got a dependable reblooming seedling from 'Violet Music' and have had scores of reblooming seedlings from 'Suky.' Of course, I was never able to get 'Suky' to set a pod, but both J. D. Stadler and Sterling Innerst have been able to do it.

Everyone in the Triple R Reblooming Robin wishes our fellow robin member Virginia Davis of Fremont, California a speedy recovery from her eye surgery!

## HE THREW IT AWAY

By Elmer Werner

I was walking through Keith Chadwick's seedling iris with him, admiring his rebloomers, when I spotted a beautiful yellow. I asked Keith if he would give me a start when he divided it. He smiled and reached down and handed me a rhizome.

The next spring when his new seedlings bloomed, he was so impressed with his new seedlings, he rotary tilled his old patch up, his beautiful yellow and all.

My one rhizome grew and started blooming. Then in July it rebloomed, then again in August, then again in September.

I promptly dug up a rhizome and returned it, teasing Keith by saying he had rotary tilled up his best rebloomer. That was in the year 1999. Every year since then, that beautiful yellow (registered JULY YELLOW,) has sent up a flower every July, August and September til this year. This year, it also rebloomed in October. This year some of the plants had two or three rebloom stalks at once.

However, I don't think all this rebloom will come again, as this year has been special. I had two plants of ELMER'S OCEAN TIDE. This iris has only rebloomed twice a year since 2000, but this year it started blooming the first of August and we have had flowers from them every day until the last of October. The last two bloomed out in the house. I cut them before they froze in the field.

The spring bloom of ELMER'S OCEAN TIDE had horns, but on rebloom, it started putting out flounces. When I cut a bud for the house, I never know what it will look like until it opens.

I am new at this and all I have learned so far is the more I learn, the less I know .

I hybridized RAW TIMBER to get a good brown and I ended up with a greenish rebloomer. I gave Keith 10 or so rhizomes and the first year every one of them rebloomed with one to four stalks at a time. Since Lorna and Keith are trying so hard to get a green iris, I named it LORNA'S PRIDE after her. This iris has bloomed every year since 2000. After the first heavy rebloom, it sends up a few rebloom stalks until it freezes here.

With LORNA'S PRIDE, you have to look at the flower as we can't get any picture to come out it's true color.

I hope some day, rebloom will be classified as: once a year, twice or more a year, or when it feels like it. Then again, did one clump out of 10 or 20 send up one stalk, or did half the clumps rebloom?

I want to thank Leroy Meininger for the good information in his article and Leonard and Kathy Jedlicka for their Rebloom Report.

## Rebloom Report 2004

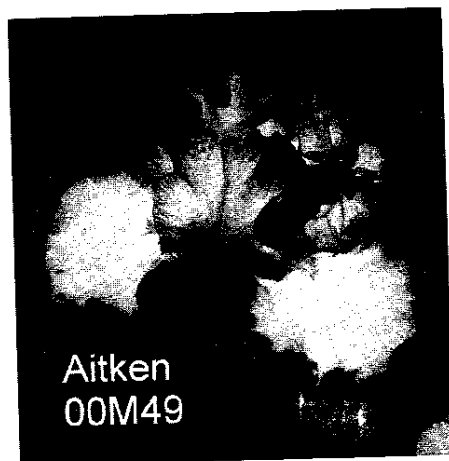
by Terry Aitken

2003 was a very good year! Spring bloom was wonderful and the rebloom started before our three month spring season was over! It all began in SDB bloom season. I had collected seed from Bennett Jones' seedling #615-4. (see Jan. Bulletin, page 57). One (out of 120) was particularly floriferous and colorful so I set a pod on it. 30 days later when the TBs were in bloom, it was back in bloom again WHILE CARRYING THE POD, NOW 30 DAYS OLD! Right then and there, I broke up the large clump and moved it to better dirt in the reselect bed. This summer, I will leave it alone to see if it can bloom every 30 days all summer long. (Meanwhile, it will be crossed with other rebloomers.)

A sprinkling of rebloom continued thru July and picked up momentum in August and Sept. All categories of bearded irises were represented and there was a pattern of SDBs (98M3=Lumalite x Joe Cool) in July, IB's (00M49=Autumn Circus x Fairy Rings) in August, BBs (00M40RE=Hasta La Vista x Coral Encore), MTBs (00M6RE = Coral Charmer x Pele) and TB's (98T15RE= Excellency x Romantic Evening) in September (see cover.)

I had crossed TENNESSEE VOL (because it was an orange TB reported as hardy in New England) with PURE AS GOLD (our earliest summer rebloomer). (see photo 00T5) Since oranges usually are recessive, I was surprised to get an orange rebloomer from this cross.

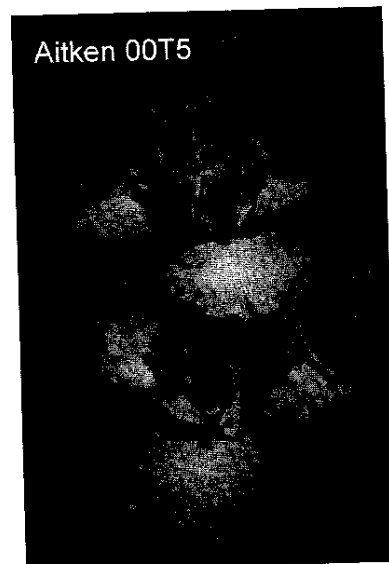
This opens up all kinds of possibilities including working them in with our red TBs.- then down with our SDB rebloomers, fertile IB rebloomers and bright pink MTB rebloomers. (See photos)



This year, we are introducing a reblooming BB called HASTA LA VISTA which we had crossed with our 2005 BB intro, CORAL ENCORE. The result was a very nice pink amoena which gave us sequential summer bloom through August into September.

Another interesting cross was made on the advice of Bob Schreiner from many years ago. He suggest

that if we wanted to get a really black iris, we should try to cross yellows onto blacks. Seeing the opportunity to kill two birds with one stone, I crossed PURE AS GOLD with HELLO DARKNESS and got some pretty respectable deep red/blacks. See photo 00T75-(re?) I did not wait to find out if they would rebloom but





went ahead and made sib crosses on the two best seedlings to get the next generation going. (I know the rebloom genes are in there!) Somewhere in the next generation population, there should be rebloom.

Next year's offerings will include Japanese irises that bloom sequentially in the spring for over a month while summer and fall bloom is less predictable. Soon after should come more sequential blooming Siberians from REDDY OR NOT. (I will see a good crop of these this summer) I am also crossing REDDY OR NOT with yellow Siberians to get orange reblooming Siberians. Time will tell!

I have begun searching other iris categories for rebloom and would appreciate any suggestions of good rebloom candidates that anyone would care to make. Spurias -Species - PCIs - Arils - LAs - whatever. Let me hear from you.

### **Breeding Rebloomers in Kentucky**

By Betty Wilkerson

My first exposure to reblooming irises was in the fall of 1982. The Henry Field's catalog offered a collection of fall blooming irises. I'd never heard of irises blooming in the fall and ordered some right away. It seemed like a natural extension of my extreme love for irises and planted a small seed of interest in the back of my mind. These irises figured into my decision to make a few tall bearded reblooming iris crosses.

I've developed my own lines in various colors, but research time is still spent in finding irises that will rebloom in my garden. I also hunt for those that rebloom anywhere as I find they enhance my program. The potential of any cultivar will depend on your personal goals.

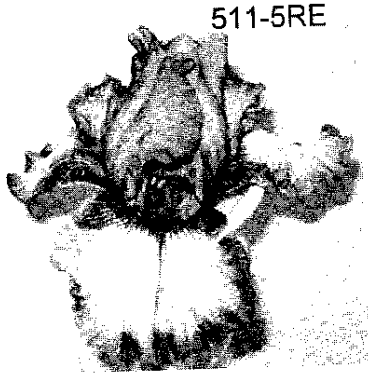
Oncers or spring (only) blooming irises, are irises that will never rebloom anywhere and do not carry rebloom in their genetic makeup. Still, they may have qualities that you want to include in your lines. 'Silverado' is one of these irises. It's even been theorized that 'Silverado' carries a rebloom blocker, yet it has other good qualities. I've used 'Silverado' in a pastel line that seems to produce only white seedlings. 'Silverado' has also been incorporated into a bitone line. Future generations of these lines should be interesting.



Rebloom carriers and coastal rebloomers are lumped together in my program. Carriers are proven parents of rebloomers, but never rebloom themselves, while coastal rebloomers often rebloom in areas where their cultural needs are met. These irises can be everbloomers in California and other coastal regions, but often qualify as sporadic rebloomers in cooler regions like mine. My Kentucky garden is in zone 6.



Northern rebloomers are those that rebloom well and reliably in colder regions. Originally, I depended on the irises of Lloyd Zurbrigg, Dr. Raymond Smith, Earl Hall, and Ben Hager for the backbone of my program. Dr. Smith's 'Lemon Reflection' is a parent of 'Summer Radiance'. Lloyd's 'Immortality' and 'Earl of Essex' figure heavily in certain lines with 'Violet Classic' and 'Violet Miracle' in others.



Although Ben Hager lived in California, he knew what it took to produce reblooming irises that performed in less temperate climates. I've used his 'Feedback' extensively. My lines are, primarily, a mixture of northern rebloomers and coastal rebloomers. Northern rebloomers figure heavily in this year's introductions.

'Memphis Miss' is a child of Earl Hall's 'Pink Attraction.' It does not rebloom, but it is an extremely strong cultivar that puts up a lot of bloom stalks and it's fertile both ways. It is being used in the quest for improved and varied pink rebloomers and it has already produced an outstanding laced child which has been named 'Angel Among Us.' 'Angel Among Us' is also fertile both ways. I love it!

'Tara's Choice' was produced when I crossed one of my red seedlings from rebloom lines with 'Feed Back.' 'Violet Miracle' is also in the background of 'Tara's Choice.' This is another iris that I consider a lucky break along with 'Bridge In Time' and 'Returning Chameleon.'

Years ago, I theorized that irises that rebloom in Kentucky would probably rebloom in most other areas. My rebloom breeding program began with the desire to produce rebloomers that would rebloom over larger areas of the country. In addition to the home garden in KY, both 'Theme Master' and 'Tara's Choice' have fall bloomed in TN and MS.

First, you can cross northern rebloomers to northern rebloomers, and you will get northern rebloomers in both rebloom habits and form. I've found that most of the northern rebloomers grow and do well in my area. At this point, I can't think of one that's died in any of my Kentucky gardens. This method guarantees a large number of reblooming seedlings; I think most are very pretty.

Second, you can cross northern rebloomers to coastal rebloomer and/or rebloom carriers. This can produce a large number of reblooming seedlings. I've had good luck with this type of cross and it is probably my favorite. When I crossed 'Violet Returns' x 'Breakers,' eight out of approximately forty rebloomed. That's 20% rebloom, but it seemed like a lot to me.

With the third method, you can cross coastal rebloomers with coastal rebloomers and hope to get irises that rebloom well everywhere. This method does work, occasionally. 'City Lights' is an iris that I would put in this classification, remembering that it comes from 'Windsurfer' which comes from 'Victoria Falls.' 'Victoria Falls' could not be termed a northern rebloomer, but it is generous with rebloom in KY, at least for some of us! There are many irises that fall in this category.

The last method is to cross spring blooming (oncurs) in hopes of getting a seedling that reblooms. This is not a very productive method of breeding rebloomers. Yet, there are those that use this method.

My program involves using method two, until I've produced many irises among my seedlings that rebloom

regularly here in KY. My seedlings will then be northern rebloomers! Right? Then my program will shift more to method number one, with some method two still thrown in.

As you can see, the experiments continue. There are over 1,000 seed in frozen pots! I've a new laboratory (garden) and I anxiously await the coming of another spring! Many of my seedlings bloomed in the summer and fall of last year, and I'm especially interested in this coming summer and fall to evaluate further.

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## Sweethearts Again

By Paul Hill

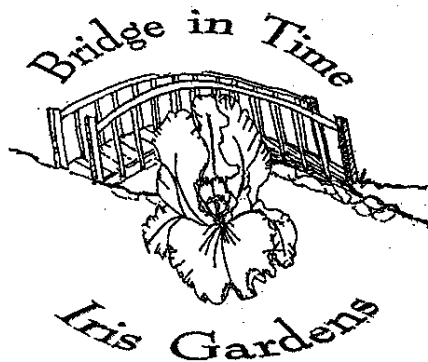
One of the strongest memories that I have of my childhood is that of a fascination with seeds. At an early age I was allowed to plant a small garden plot of my very own. I planted every possible type of flower that I could start from seed and squeezed it into a small 3 yard square space that I had dug. I can still remember the amazement that I felt holding the tiny seeds that would somehow magically become the flowering plant promised on the Burpee seed package. I was so convinced of that magic that I even became a door to door Burpee seed salesman, but alas, the trials of the door to door endeavor were more than I could handle at the tender age of ten.

I remember seeing tall bearded iris grow at my Aunt Bea's home, but since she would cut the stalks right after the bloom, I never made the connection of iris and seeds. Iris were dug and divided, and though I liked the flower, they were another beast. It wasn't until well after college and the pursuit of a career as a professional photographer in NYC, that I stumbled upon Iris again. When I did, it changed my life. When I realized that not only could I plant Iris by seed, but I could also change the direction of the evolution of the form and color of the plant through cross breeding, it was a revelation. There was no going back.

It didn't take me long to discover the further amazing traits and challenges of the reblooming Iris. I read everything I could get my hands on to understand how best to achieve the goals that I had. Unschooled in the world of genetics, I reread some articles a hundred times, each time understanding just a little bit more. There were clues everywhere, some hybridizers revealing more than others, but Monty Byers was my hero early on. His enthusiasm was infectious, his devotion to the rebloomer firm. His final catalogue is still among one of my favorite possessions.

Life found me attempting to grow the standard dwarf bearded iris in Atlanta, Georgia. With the warm winters there, the seedlings would sometimes take two years to bloom, if at all. Many TB's would melt where they stood. Then there were the violent storms! It amazed me that Iris survived at all, but some did.

One spring morning as I assessed the damage of the heavy winds brought by the near miss of a tornado, I found the first blossoms of the season on two different plants. The first was 'Chanted'. It was open, but bent over by the heavy rain and winds. The other blossom was on a new introduction from George Sutton that I had just planted the previous fall. 'Caution Sign' stood upright and perky and seemed unaffected by the storm; even the style lip was dry. So I pulled out my tweezers and put pollen from 'Chanted' onto it. I had read somewhere the theory that if you wanted a rebloomer to result from a cross, the selection of the pod parent should be the rebloomer. 'Caution Sign' was listed in the garden catalogue as a rebloomer having a white beard. Oddly enough, what I saw that morning was a distinct blue in the beard. This interested me further since one of my earliest goals was to make a pink reblooming SDB with a blue beard. Since both parents were carrying the blue bearded trait, I knew that the chances were much greater of getting seedlings with blue beards out of the cross. I suspected that this might be a good place to start, plus with 'Chanted' appearing to be damaged, there really seemed to be only one option.



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**MEMPHIS MISS:** Sdlg. 732-Pk TB, 30", L. Pink self with a tangerine beard. From rebloom breeding, this one does not rebloom, even when gusted in California. It is very prolific of increase and bloom. Once established it puts on quite a show. Proven breeder for strong pinks. Presence X Pink Attraction. \$45.00

**SOFTLY RENEWED:** Sdlg. 635Re. TB, 35". M & RE. Light to medium violet blue self, depending on the weather, with white beards tipped yellow. Rebloom is sporadic in the home garden and it has not been tried in other regions. Softly Renewed carries great breeding potential for rebloomers. Pod Fertile. Laced Cotton X Feedback. \$45.00

**TARA'S CHOICE:** Sdlg. 925-1RE. TB, 32" M & RE in October in KY. S. greyed reddish purple; F. Medium blue, "edge and shoulders matching S." beards pale lavender, hairs tipped old gold. Fall bloomed in the Memphis display gardens. (Her Royal Highness x Inferno)X Feedback. Fertile both ways. \$50.00

**THEME MASTER:** Sdlg. 1002-1RE. EM & RE in Late September and early October in KY. S. Greyed medium dark purple; style arms dark purple; F. Dark purple with "edge matching standard color. Beards white tipped old gold. Heavy rebloom in Kentucky. Fall bloomed in Memphis display gardens. CF2-1Re ((Autumn Encore x Roman Lover) x Feedback X G18-1Re ((Orbiter x Feedback) x Violet Classic). Fertile both ways. \$ 50.00

**VANISHING ACT:** Sdlg. 912-1Re TB 36 M & RE Vanishing Act is a peek-a-boo plicata! Now you see the rim, now you don't. White S & F with 3/8<sup>th</sup> inch palest blue ring aging lighter or only visible as a blush in the throat in hot weather. Beards white, hairs tipped pale yellow in throat. Pod fertile, pollen untested. Vanishing Act has bloomed in July in KY but rebloom usually comes in late October. V.A. Earned 2 EC's based on spring bloom. (Laced Cotton x Autumn Encore) X Renown. \$50.00

The following year I saw no bloom on the seedlings, and because of the lack of garden space I nearly tossed the entire cross. I noticed that some of the plants were showing good growth, so I kept them. Then later that year, hundreds of other seedlings began to melt due to an overly wet summer and high temperatures. At least the seedlings of the 9808 cross (Caution Sign x Chanted) grew well.

As luck would have it, job opportunities were to take us away from Georgia and leave us in Washington DC. The entire garden was dug, labeled, and washed and dried. At the new home, beds had to be dug and the whole lot of seedlings replanted into their new soil. I was tempted on more than one occasion during this exhausting process to dump the seedlings from 9808, but I didn't. Many hybridizers have said that if seedlings don't bloom in the first year, they're removed from the garden to make room for other seedlings. These words rang in my head with each shovelful of Virginia clay.

The following spring was terrific! The first to open was one from the 9808 cross, a yellow with a blue beard. The next to open had me on cloud nine. Also from 9808, this clone had light pink standards with darker falls and a bright blue beard! I grabbed my nearest neighbor and tried to share my excitement with her, but her passion was with azaleas. She gave me a polite smile and slipped away as quickly as possible.

Except for a creamy orange clone with blue beards, all the rest of the plants from the 9808 cross were small and with weak flowers. Imagine my excitement when both the pink and the orange rebloomed later that fall! The pink clone was named 'Sweethearts Again'. The orange clone has fall petals that flare up too much, but the color is wonderful. This spring I will be blooming seedlings from the sib cross of these two. It will be very interesting to see if the orange coloring can be achieved without the flaring of the petals. For first year seedlings, the growth seems to be excellent. I choose to see this as a good omen.

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## **PUSHING SEEDLINGS**

by Mike Greenfield

Seeing a seedling that you helped nature create is one of the most exciting things you can experience. The anticipation as you watch the bloom stalks form. You find yourself checking your seedlings daily, and then one evening you see one about to open. Darkness falls and it has not opened yet. The first thing when you wake, you run to the window to see. Wow! Sure enough, it has opened and you find yourself running out half dressed to see it. The bloom is beautiful — it doesn't matter that the stalk is too short for a TB and the bloom is too big for a BB. It is yours and you were the first person to ever see it.

I want to share the method I have used to hurry that experience up. I am a beginning hybridizer, having made my first crosses in 1997. I live in southwestern Ohio in zone 5b. I do not have a big garden and space is limited. (Like most iris growers I try to grow too many.) My first batch of seeds sprouted in April of 1998. I realized I would not have a place to plant them until July or August, so when the seedlings were about 1" to 2" tall I transplanted them into 4" pots, one per pot. As more germinated I continued with this process.

I place about 1" rotted, well aged horse manure in the bottom of each pot. When the manure is not available I use composted cow manure purchased in the 40-pound bags. This might not be a requirement, but it worked well for me so I stuck with it. Then I use a good potting soil to fill the pot. I use Smart Soil or an equivalent, with the polymer crystals. It seems to help keep the soil from drying out.

Once the potting was finished and the labels attached, I water them in, keeping the soil slightly moist. I never let them dry out completely. Every two weeks I water with a solution of one gallon of water and 2 tablespoons of liquid plant food such as Miracle Grow or something similar. I use a watering can with a sprinkler head, and



water over head. I place the pots in plastic nursery trays that hold 12 or 18 Losses due to rot are less than 5 percent. I think that is because of hot and humid weather. The pots receive full sun all day long. I did have chicken wire covers to keep squirrels and other critters out.

By late July I have seedlings up to 12" tall and most are showing increases. The first year I had SDB seedlings from one re-blooming parent. After lining out they made more increases on the original increases. That fall, from spring germinated seed, 6 out of 40 seedling bloomed. All but about 8 bloomed the next spring. On a different SDB cross in 1999 I had a seed-

ling with 32 fans by fall (see photo.) About 80% of the TB seedlings bloomed the following spring. I have used this process since the first year with consistently similar results.

I plant my seeds in late November in chrysanthemum pots (bigger around than a gallon pot but about 60 percent as tall) with the same potting soil as I used for the seedlings. I do not have very good germination. 2003 was better at 40%.

I think the potting in cooler weather reduces transplant shock that occurs when you plant them in July. You have no shock when planting the potted ones because the root ball is nearly undisturbed. It also helps to combat frost heave because you have a much stronger root system by the time winter arrives. Of course this method would be for small operations. I would not like to try 3000 seedlings this way.

Give it a try, it might work for you.

## **JACARANDA LAD** **Reblooming Louisiana Iris**

By Dalynne "D.J." Marini, Virginia Beach, VA

I am writing to report an event which I believe is new to us all. I purchased 'Jacaranda Lad' from "Isle of View Gardens" in Washington state in the fall of 2002. I promptly planted it, and it bloomed for me last spring, 2003. To my amazement this cultivar started to form new bloom stalks in November. This iris is blooming today Jan. 5th 2004. I have been corresponding with Lynn at "Isle of View Gardens" about this to determine its history in her garden. She has assured me that it is indeed "Jacaranda Lad" but it has never re-bloomed in her garden. I wanted to make certain that she had been growing it in her garden for at least a couple of years, since the iris originated from the southern hemisphere, and that it had been acclimated to the northern hemisphere growing cycle. She claims that it has been. I also



have corresponded with Heather Pryor in Australia, she has also never experienced a re-bloom of this variety. I am sure that our mild weather along the mid-Atlantic region has contributed to this event, plus the iris is growing on the southern side of my house, in an area that receives ample moisture and radiant heat reflected from the brick on my house. It will also be interesting to see how it blooms during its normal bloom time in the spring.

## Rebloomers

by Ann Dee Barrows, Glencoe, Oklahoma

I had been growing iris for several years before I learned that there were a few varieties that would bloom more than one time a year. I attended a judging school given by Virginia Matthews on Reblooming Iris and I was "hooked".

After much study of catalogs, I selected five TB's (Immortality, Harvest of Memories, Earl of Essex, Queen Dorothy and Reincarnation) and five SDB's (Baby Blessed, Sunstrip, Plum Wine, Flower Shower and Rainbow Sherbet). These iris were sent in late July and I was delighted to have all of the SDB's and two of the TB's bloom in mid to late October. Then I was informed that the bloom had been set in the plants before I got them and they might not rebloom in our area. Happily, these varieties do rebloom here and I still grow all of them.

After much trial and error, I discovered that to get consistent rebloom, these iris need some of the same care as a rose; extra water, fertilize just after spring bloom and keep as weed free as possible. Most of them increase faster than iris that bloom just one time a year and need to be dug fairly often to prevent overcrowding. With a little extra work I usually have fairly good rebloom. But when we have a long, hot, dry summer, it reduces the rebloom. I have added many varieties that include rebloom in their registration. I have learned that many varieties that rebloom in California and Mississippi will not do so for me in north central Oklahoma. I have better luck with varieties that have rebloomed in Pennsylvania, Nebraska, Tennessee and western Virginia.

Last summer was one of those hot dry summers. I did not water any of my iris and thought that the two stalks on an IB, 'Champagne Encore,' during early July would be most of my rebloom. Happily I was wrong. 'Champagne Encore' sent up four more stalks in August, five stalks in September and four more in October. Another IB, 'Persimmon Pie,' bloomed all of October and most of November, sending up 13 bloom stalks. I had just planted a TB, 'Peach Jam,' in August and it bloomed one stalk in October and one in November, setting a seed pod that was lost to a freeze. Other TB's that fall bloomed included 'Royal Encore,' an old purple, 'Immortality,' 'Bonus Mama,' 'Maroon Moon,' 'Eternal Bliss' and 'Autumn Circus.' Some IB's that rebloomed were 'Low Ho Silver,' 'Raspberry Silk,' 'Season's Ticket,' 'Color Brite' and 'Sheba's Flame,' which is a rusty red.

Late October and all of November until freeze, the SDB's put on a show. Those blooming included: 'Star Prince,' a dark purple; 'Sunstrip,' a yellow with a red spot; 'Baby Blessed,' a light yellow; 'Third Charm,' a blue violet; and 'Smell the Roses,' a blue. I also had five seedlings rebloom. One was an interesting apricot and white. Unfortunately it has only five buds, but I did enjoy cutting the last stalk which opened in the house for a Thanksgiving Dinner display.

Have fun, grow some rebloomers, but give them some extra room so that you don't have to dig them so often.

*The above article was reprinted with permission from the Region 22 Newsletter*





# Reblooming Iris

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