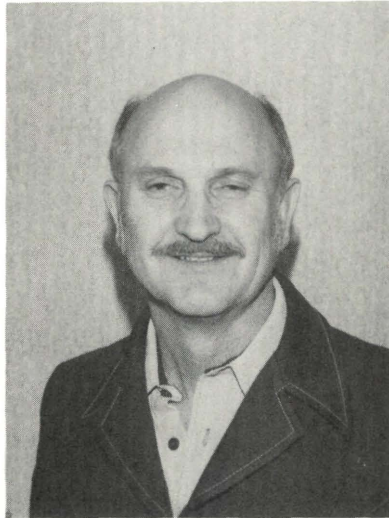


IRIS PROFILES

ELVAN RODERICK Convention Cup Collector



About ten years ago, Georgia Hinkle wrote that she had finally found someone she felt could carry on her line. This someone was Elvan Roderick, affectionately known as 'Al' or 'Rod' to his many friends. And, Georgia was correct. By using her TEMPO with Hazel Schmelzer's FAVORITE TOPIC, Elvan Roderick was able to produce his first three introductions: MOODY BLUE, CHERISHED MEMORY, and RUFFLED BALLET. The latter iris won the Franklin Cook Cup at the Denver convention in 1982, after being a runner-up for the same award at Lansing in 1976. But that is getting ahead of our story.

* * * * *

Al was born at Worthan, Missouri, in 1930. At age 14 he discovered irises. Riding his bicycle to the swimming hole, he was forced afoot when he got a flat tire in front of an old, burned-down house. In the yard of the house he noticed a fragrant, buttonhole-stitched old diploid iris blooming. Two years later he was spending the money he made from selling his bantam chickens' eggs to buy a collection of irises at 10¢ each.

After high school he joined the navy, spending most of his tour of duty on the West Coast or in Hawaii. He then returned to Missouri—and to his high school sweetheart, Pauline Gregory. After working for a number of years in the florist trade, in 1963 he bought his own shop in Desloge. Those who attended the 1981 convention will remember the shop and adjoining garden.

Al had made a few crosses in 1960, but was forced to curb his efforts due to lack of time when the florist shop was purchased. A member of AIS for many years, he is a charter member of the Mineral Area Iris Society and served as its second president.

When Ada Buxton was RVP of Region 18, she appointed him a judge, and he began visiting the gardens of the hybridizers in the area. In 1970 he began hybridizing again, due to the encouragement of Dorothy Palmer and Georgia Hinkle, and has raised a limited number of seedlings ever since—limited because iris season is also the busy season at the shop.

His small patch has done very well, however. He introduced his first irises in 1975, and with the three introductions for 1983, has a total of 14 introductions to his credit. Included among this small group is the uniquely colored COPPER CLASSIC, which won the Presidents Cup at the 1981 St. Louis convention.

He also found time to raise a family. Al and Pauline have two grown daughters and a son just edging into his teen years, as well as five grandchildren. And, if the talk about retiring from business in the not-too-distant-future means anything, we'll be expecting to see a lot more Roderick iris seedlings.

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