

Edgehill: Jack & Rosalie Lovings Garden

by Jim & Jean Morris, Missouri

THIS GARDEN WAS THE PERFECT ENDING TO OUR FIRST DAY OF tours in the Fredericksburg area. Jack and Rosalie Loving have made their home here for more than 30 years and the great oak tree in the front yard is older. We wanted to tie a yellow ribbon around it so we would remember to come back.

The irises here were as wonderful as the genuine welcome from the garden owners. The first to catch our eye was SARGENT PRESTON (Chapman 00), a TB which formed a beautiful clump in tan over amethyst. Sporting show stalks in this and other gardens was MELTED BUTTER (Fan 94) in shades of white and yellow. Many Sterling Innerst creations performed well including his black, ANVIL OF DARKNESS (98); APPARENT SECRET (01), yellow over rosy violet veined yellow; CONTINUITY (94) true blue with navy beards; DOROTHY DAVIS (95) a peachy orange creation; and EROTIC TOUCH (98), in bright butterscotch with a violet blaze. EROTIC TOUCH sported stalks with 7-10 buds, and DOROTHY DAVIS was so covered with bloom that it drew a crowd.

Joe Ghio's irises are always attractive and the Lovings grew them well. IMPULSIVE (01) is peach over orange with red beards, NEXT MILLENIUM (00) is white over black-red with orange beards, ORIGINAL ART (03) has standards the color of orange sherbet and falls in red-black with orange around big red beards, and RETURN TO SENDER (00) is lavender over red-violet with white veining around white beards. Cameras were clicking away! Not to be overlooked is Ghio's BB BORDER GUARD (03) in peachy pink over burnt orange.

MAUNA LOA FIRE (F. Rogers 01) is attractive in butterscotch over redwood, heavily veined butterscotch. CROCODILE ROCK (B. Nichols 03) is a nice BB in light gold over cream with mauve plicata marks; it has old gold beards and small horns. Two of Hooker Nichols' seedlings looked good: **2171A** in ruffled yellow over cream with yellow hafts, and **2146A** in flesh tones with coral beards. Two of Lowell

Baumunk's seedlings were really great: A border bearded, **748-H**, is cream with a neon lemon spot, while **873-CC** is an MTB in tan over cream marked lavender. Lowell's species cross, **PETIT LION** (01), is a good-looking flower of gold over red-violet heavily veined yellow.

SPLASHACATA (Tasco 98) is destined for greatness. It was voted the Franklin Cook Cup as the best out-of-region iris seen at convention. It is pale lavender over white, heavily dotted all over in red-violet and pencil edged lavender. Smashing!

Carl Boswell's IB, **DEVILISH NATURE** (98) in chocolate over amethyst, edged brown, is very attractive, as was Terry Varner's MTB seedling **R-303** in blue purple with cream beards. Two of Larry Lauer's 2001 TB introductions were growing next to each other and were quite a play on words: **NOW SEE THIS** and **IT'S GETTING BETTER**. The first is a ruffled red-purple while the second is old gold over lavender-blue with a blue beard. One of the most stunning irises was **WESTPONTER** (Sutton 01), a TB-SA that George describes as satinwood over red-violet. Whatever. We like it and the half-inch spoons are something else.

Jack Loving hybridizes Siberians and certainly knows how to grow them well. Two by Calvin Helsley, **WHERE EAGLES DARE** (95), a vigorous black-purple, and **CARMEN JEANNE** (96) in royal purple with nice white signals, were both beautiful. Five Siberians by Schafer-Sacks were outstanding. **TURN A PHRASE** (00) is light blue over blue-violet and **TOM SCHAEFER** (00) is extremely yellow, lighter on top. The very ruffled **SARAH TIFFNEY** (99) is such a pretty pastel in lavender with yellow style tips and signals. The standout was **WHITE AMBER** (01) a petite lavender with a yellow influence; it also has yellow styles and signals, and it formed an attractive clump. Also tall and lovely was **BANISH MISFORTUNE** (99) in bright lavender with straw signals.

In the refreshment area under the deck, the Lovings displayed a poster showing their garden's growth progression. This was an interesting touch. Camping friends (and they were delightful) from Ontario, Canada, manned the refreshment tables so the Lovings could circulate and visit with garden guests. Dozens of perennials surrounded the house, including hosta, lupine, astilbe, fern, columbine, solomon's seal, viola, sedum, oxalis, azalea, *I. cristata* "Summer Storm" and *I. tectorum* — all blooming in profusion. When it comes to growing plants, the Lovings certainly do have the "loving touch." We will long remember this garden and its charming, thoughtful hosts. Thank you Jack and Rosalie. 