

the

GLOXINIAN

The Journal for Gesneriad Growers

Vol. 51, No. 4

Fourth Quarter 2001

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST 50 YEARS 1951-2001



AGGS 50th Anniversary "Cake"

American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc.

A non-profit membership corporation chartered by the State of Missouri

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Gesneriad Hybridizers Association — *CrossWords*, 3 issues, \$8. Send to Richard Carter, 516 North 3rd Street, Spearfish, SD 57783.
Newsletter Editors — *Newsviews*, free to editors; \$6 subscription to others. Contact Carol Ann Bonner, 3705 Tibbs Drive, Nashville, TN 37211-3413 <cadastra@mindspring.com>

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Gesneriphiles Internet Discussion Group — To join, send the following message: subscribe gesneriphiles <your name>: to: listproc@lists.colorado.edu from the email address you wish to receive the postings.

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COVER

50th Anniversary "Cake"
created by Dale Martens
– see page 4 for details –
and awarded Best Craft
(Photo by Bob Stewart)

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Cover: Created by Dale Martens, this bakery display cake was made of real Royal icing and fondant icing with a center of styrofoam. There were 43 flowers and 172 leaves all representing gesneriads – Streptocarpus, Sinningias, Episcias, Smithianthas, and a tiny *Sinningia* 'Snowflake'. These "plants" were made with icing and thin florist wire. The leaves were first shaped carefully by hand and then pressed against the appropriate living leaf to give the accurate size and realistic leaf veining. The delicate flowers were all hand-made with fondant icing.

ADVERTISERS DIRECTORY

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President's Message

Susan Grose <sagrose@aol.com>
4201 West 99th St., Overland Park, KS 66207

When I joined the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society more than 30 years ago, I never expected to have the honor of writing this column. When I first read *THE GLOXINIAN* those many years ago, I was in awe of the knowledge of the people writing the articles. I still am. I was also drawn by their enthusiasm for the plants and their willingness to share knowledge so that others could enjoy the plants as much as they did. I still am. In the local New England Chapter I found welcoming and generous people willing to share both information and their plants with other members. Ten years ago when I moved to Kansas City and joined the Heart of America Chapter, I found the same enthusiasm and generosity. I believe I would find it in any chapter.

The annual conventions offer an additional dimension to the experience of growing Gesneriads, and I recommend attending one if you possibly can. Every year I return from the convention energized and inspired to improve my growing habits, to grow some new gesneriad species or hybrid, and to bring a new member into our group. This year we had a special treat—a presentation by our founder, Elvin McDonald. (Be sure to read the articles about the convention in this issue.)

I have been growing Gesneriads since I produced plantlets from a Saintpaulia leaf as part of a high school biology science project on plant propagation. About ten years later I joined the New England Chapter and almost immediately became a member of AGGS. I was inspired by seeing the chapter's gesneriad exhibit at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society spring flower show. I remember being enchanted by the brightly colored blossoms on Kohlerias, the large velvety leaves and decorative foliage of Episcias, and the fascinating variety of plants in one plant family. Little did I know what a wonderful world awaited me. I lived in an old apartment building with huge windows perfect for hanging plants. I have never grown a better *Columnnea* 'Joy', 'Yellow Dragon' or 'California Gold' than I did there. My windows have never been as large or as sunny since. Even though most of my plants now grow under lights in the basement and a few varieties grow outside in the summer on my patio, my first love is still being able to grow and display some gesneriad varieties in my living room windows.

I still remember the first "piece" of a gesneriad that someone gave me after I had admired it and asked what it was. The plant was *Gloxinia lindeniana*. I liked the patterned foliage and the fact that it was an attractive plant even without blossoms. The person just pulled a piece out of the terrarium in which it was growing and gave it to me. I was so excited that someone would actually give me a piece of what I thought was a rare and exotic plant. I then shouldn't have been surprised (but I was) at how good one feels after giving a "piece" of a gesneriad to someone else. In fact that first experience for me was my sharing that same *Gloxinia lindeniana* with someone else who had admired my plant.

It still fascinates me that Gesneriads root so easily from cuttings and often from leaves. I have never lost my amazement at that "miracle". I am especially hoping for a miracle that the \$30 leaf I won in the convention auction roots and makes plants. I will keep you posted.

The first President of AGGS (then AGS) was Vera Dillard of Kansas City, elected at the first Kansas City convention 45 years ago. I wonder what she envisioned for our organization. I'll have to locate some of the original issues of THE GLOXINIAN and see what she wrote. As we approach the end of the celebration of the first 50 years of our organization and enter the 21st century and look to our future, we all need to help spread our plant material and growing knowledge of this fascinating plant family to others. We want to keep growing new plants in addition to the old favorites and continue cultivating new members as well as renewing current members. I hope you will communicate to me or to any other board member your ideas on ways to gain new members and spread our information. Your board members are your representatives and are here to serve the best interests of our organization. Communication is the lifeblood of this society and one of the primary ways is through our wonderful journal, THE GLOXINIAN.

I challenge all of you to help our society grow, to take advantage of the current technological advances to help more people learn about this wonderful and diverse plant family. We have the technology and the enthusiasm. Let's do it!

Tell local garden centers about the Gesneriads you grow and share your plants with them. Share your plants with botanic gardens so they can grow them in their display gardens. Give talks to other gardening organizations or at flower shows. Hold public displays of Gesneriads along with plant sales. Let's have Gesneriads everywhere!!

Susan



Susan Grose greeting conventioners at the opening breakfast in the revolving restaurant high atop the Hyatt Regency Hotel

Jessie Crisafulli was an active and dedicated member of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society and a mainstay of the New England Chapter. While we were aware of Jessie's failing health, it was sad to receive the call from her daughter, Frances, that Jessie died on June 9. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to her family and especially to Tony, her husband of 64 years. Both Jessie and Tony were so much a part of AGGS that we can't think of one without the other.



A noted horticulturist, Jessie was a past president of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, and its New England Chapter, and was active in the African Violet Society of America, and the Belchertown Garden Club.

Over the years, Jessie served in many other ways including as a Director of AGGS. Jessie's dedication to AGGS is partly measured in her effort to bring plants to the Convention Shows. For many years, the Sweepstakes Award was hers. To that often-asked question about how to get plants to convention, Jessie and Tony's solution was to remove the back seat of the car and drive to that year's Convention site. Jessie received an Award of Appreciation from AGGS in 1989.

Equally committed to the New England Chapter, Jessie served as Chapter President and, for several years, as Treasurer. Every chapter meeting was enriched by Jessie and Tony's participation. In addition to sharing her Gesneriad expertise, Jessie almost always brought sale plants and Little Show entries. Tony brought his camera and his special baked goods. In season, they often shared the harvest of their flower and vegetable gardens. They have been greatly missed as health problems kept them from making the two-hour drive to meetings in recent years.

On occasions when we had joint meetings of the New England, Connecticut and Berkshire Chapters at Holyoke Community College, we gathered afterward at Jessie and Tony's home—the ultimate setting for learning how to grow Gesneriads of every shape and size in minimal space.

Tony would appreciate hearing from their old friends. His address is Meadowood Nursing Home, 573 Granby Road, South Hadley, MA 01075.

— *Mary Bozoian*

Open Letter to the Members of AGGS –

Thank you all for your kind cards and letters of condolence to Tony. I know that he very much appreciates the contact with friends, as well as the expressions of sympathy. My sisters and I have been very moved by the sentiments expressed. Thank you for continuing to keep both Tony and Jessie in your thoughts and prayers over the last years. This means a great deal to all of us.

Most sincerely,
Frances Crisafulli

Slide Program News

Our newest slide program, "Kansas City: Convention 2001 Flower Show" will be available this fall. Our 50th Anniversary was marked by an exceptionally large and fine flower show. If you didn't make it to convention, this is your chance to see the blue-ribbon winners and other special gesneriads exhibited in Kansas City. If you did make it to convention, surely you'll want to see these great plants again. Contact me for availability. As a reminder, the following programs are also available:

- Introduction to Gesneriads (56 slides)
- Tampa: Convention 2000 (79 slides)
- Nashville: Convention 1999 (75 slides)
- *Achimenes* (59 slides)
- *Chirita* (60 slides)
- The Companion Genera: *Nematanthus* and *Codonanthe* (77 slides)
- *Kohleria* (72 slides)
- *Sinningia* (80 slides)
- *Streptocarpus* Species (75 slides)
- *Streptocarpus* Hybrids (79 slides)

Programs can be reserved by mail to Dee Stewart, 1 No Name Road, Stow, MA 01775-1604 or email to dee.stewart@110.net. Specify the program to be reserved and the date the program is required. Since new programs are very popular, it is helpful if you provide as much lead-time as possible, provide alternate dates, or alternate programs that would be acceptable. Please specify the address the program is to be mailed to and a contact phone number. Program rental of \$20.00 U.S. payable to AGGS must be received before the program can be shipped. Your request will be promptly acknowledged and programs will be shipped to arrive at least one week in advance of your reserved date. Older programs are shipped in slide sleeves and must be placed in a carousel or other container for viewing. Newer programs are shipped in a carousel. Programs must be returned within 5 days of your reservation date via Priority Mail with delivery confirmation in the U.S. or the equivalent postal category from outside the U.S.



Chirita 'Kitaguni' grown by Carolyn Conlin-Lane
Awarded Best in Show – photo by Michael Riley
(More photos and an article about this new
Chirita will appear in the next issue of TG)

Seed Fund

Bob and Carol Connelly <seedster@netperson.net>
2391 Phillips Drive, Auburn Hills, MI 48326-2450

As we are writing this after the AGGS 50th Anniversary Convention in Kansas City, we also are completing our first year as the Seed Fund co-chairs. It has certainly been an interesting year, and we have learned a great deal about the Fund and Gesneriads, though it has actually seemed like we have learned more about how much we don't know!

As we reported at the convention, seed sales for the year 2000 were down a little from the record sales of 1999. This was without any convention sales last year. This year, we have had slower sales for May and June, but with the convention sales and increased July orders, we appear to be back on track.

It was great meeting many of you at the convention, and thanks for the feedback. We are hoping to try some new things later in the year, and we will have more on that in the next issue. Please keep the seed donations coming. We are looking forward to getting seed from a number of people who talked to us at the convention. (Nudge, nudge!) One of the tough parts of managing the Seed Fund is being unable to fill requests because we have run out of some varieties of seed.

We would like to thank the most recent contributors to the Seed Fund for their generosity: Clay Anderson, Marlene Beam, Carol Ann Bonner, Maryjane Evans, Richard Holzman, Alan LaVergne, Leong Tuck Lock, Clayton Matsumoto, and Dr. Johannes-Ulrich Urban.

ADDITIONS:

- Aeschynanthus fulgens*
USBRG82-271(B)
- *Aeschynanthus longicalyx* (B)
- Aeschynanthus ellipticus*
'Coral Flame' (B)
- Chirita speciosa* (dark leaf) (F,L,R)
- *Corallodiscus lanuginosus* ACE2109
(A,R)
- *Corallodiscus* sp. USBRG2000-19
(China) (A,R)
- Smithiantha multiflora* (F,LM)
- Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Popsicle'
× self (R)
- *Streptocarpus* 'Canterbury Surprise'
× self (F,R)
- Trichanthes citrina* (B)
- denotes LIMITED quantities

DELETIONS:

- Achimenes dulcis*
- Aeschynanthus boschianus*
- Aeschynanthus maculatus*
- Chirita moonii*
- Codonanthe cordifolia* AC1201
- Columnea hirta* 'Dark Prince'
- Drymonia killipii*
- Jancaea heldreichii*
- Nematanthus brasiliensis*
- Nematanthus crassifolius*
- Sinningia* 'April Starr' × self

Seed Packets — \$1.50 each

Please

- Make checks payable to the AGGS Seed Fund in U.S. funds
- To pay by credit card, send your credit card number, expiration date, and signature, and indicate if the card is Mastercard or Visa (\$6.00 minimum)
- Provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope (non-U.S. orders may include International Postal Coupons or have the postage added to their credit card bill)
- List alternate choices
- Include your membership number (first number on your mailing label)

Convention Board Review 2001

Peter Shalit, AGGS Recording Secretary <ps83@cornell.edu>
1312 East Denny Way, Seattle, WA 98122-2519

AGGGS' Fiftieth Anniversary Convention was held in Kansas City, Missouri, site of our Society's very first Convention. Your AGGS Board met for three productive sessions before, during, and after the Convention, led by outgoing President Jon Dixon and our new President Susan Grose. In addition, the annual General Membership Meeting was held after the luncheon on Friday, July 6.



AGGS Board Members at Annual Membership Meeting

The Board approved two changes in personnel among the Committee Chairs. Robert and Carol Connelly have taken over the AGGS Seed Fund since our previous Convention, and the Board ratified their appointment. Doris Carson has stepped down as Chair of the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund, and her replacement will be Paul Susi.

The Board elected the following AGGS Officers for a term ending in 2003: Susan Grose, President, and Carol Ann Bonner, First Vice President. Recording Secretary, Peter Shalit, was elected for another term.

At the Membership Meeting, the Slate of Directors presented by the Nominating Committee was approved for the three-year term ending in 2003: Carol Ann Bonner, Doris Brownlie, Connie Leifeste, Bill Price, Peter Shalit, Paul Susi, and Fay Wagman. Next year's Nominating Committee will consist of Marlene Beam (chair), Bill Price and Connie Leifeste.

Also at the Membership Meeting, Molly Schneider presented well-deserved Awards of Appreciation to two AGGS members: Elvin McDonald, founder of our Society, and Jon Dixon, outgoing AGGS President. An article about these two awardees appears elsewhere in this issue.

The Vancouver African Violet and Gesneriad Society of British Columbia, Canada, is AGGS' newest Chapter. Their charter was presented at the General Membership Meeting. Several other regions have enough AGGS members to form the nucleus of new chapters. Arleen Dewell, our Chapters and Affiliates Chair, is working with members who are exploring the formation of new chapters in their areas.

The Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter will host next year's Convention in Morristown, New Jersey, from July 2-6. We do not yet have a site for 2003. If your local chapter is interested in hosting a Convention, please contact Helen Freidberg, AGGS Conventions Chair.

The Internet has become a viable tool for our Society. Our website is popular and successful. It is an excellent source of new members, as well as a way to disseminate information about gesneriads to the rest of the world. Our Webmaster, David Turley, is looking for help in managing the site. Please contact David if you are interested.

Print publications continue to be a mainstay of what we do as an organization. The *Kohleria* Register has been published this year, and more Registers are in the works. The Publications Committee is working on reprints of articles from THE GLOXINIAN. The Board discussed the possibility of publishing electronic versions of some AGGS publications in the future; these discussions will undoubtedly continue.

Carol Ann Bonner, Publicity and Membership Promotion Chair, has created a stunning new *Aeschynanthus* logo for AGGS tee-shirts, golf shirts, and caps. The golf shirts and caps were a sellout at the Convention and were definitely the biggest fashion item in Kansas City that week. If you were unable to attend the Convention, never fear; all three items of "AGGS wear" will be available by mail via an ad in THE GLOXINIAN and via our website at <www.aggs.org>.

The Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund continues to grow, and nearly \$4500 was raised at this year's auctions. Income from the interest on the Fund helps support the operating expenses of the Society.

Helen Bortvedt, Treasurer, helped the Board arrive at a balanced budget for the next year, once again without a dues increase. We were again reminded that membership fees do not cover the costs of printing and mailing THE GLOXINIAN which must be subsidized by other revenues. THE GLOXINIAN continues to be 56 pages in length and has more color than ever. With more members, the magazine would pay for itself in membership fees.



The hard-working, but still smiling, Kansas City Convention Committee of Five:
Linda Golubski, Nancy Moerer, Pat Richards, Grace McCurnin, Susan Grose

Rhythm & Blooms in Kansas City — Convention 2001

Paul Susi <captaur@optonline.net>
6 Upper Lane, Centerport, NY 11721

If AGGS Conventions were to be rated on the availability of excellent meals, this year's in Kansas City, MO would be among the contenders. Not because of the meals offered in the hotel, which were serviceable (especially the steak served at the Awards Banquet), but because of one restaurant at which a number of convention attendees were fortunate to eat. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

My convention experience began this year (as it has for the past two years) on a Southwest Airlines plane from Islip MacArthur Airport on Long Island. Traveling with me was Rosemary Platz, a member of the Long Island Chapter and a conventioneer from several years past. Rosemary hadn't attended the more recent conventions, and it was good to travel with her and anticipate the events at this year's 50th Anniversary Convention. Our flight to Kansas City was interrupted by an additional one-hour layover in Chicago because of bad weather. The delay, however, resulted in our meeting up with two AGGS members at the Kansas City airport—Molly Schneider and Tim Tuttle of the Tennessee Chapter. The Convention had begun.

After checking in at the Hyatt shortly after one o'clock, I realized I was late for the AGGS Board meeting which, as a candidate for Director, I was invited to attend. As the Board meeting ended, conversation turned to dinner and available restaurants. Ben Paternoster and I joined Peter Shalit, Bob Clark and Suzie Larouche and headed off to Lidia's Kansas City Restaurant—a gem of a northern Italian restaurant in the middle of cow country. Situated in a former railroad freight terminal about a ten-minute walk from the hotel, it has a casual atmosphere and surprisingly moderate prices (as least for this conventioneer from the New York City area). My dinner companions all opted for the pasta sampler, and I chose a dish of grilled squid over escarole and beans in light broth. We were all extremely pleased with our choices and with the wine and dessert that accompanied and completed our meal. Ben and I returned to Lidia's two days later, with Rosemary, when all ate another great meal. As we left, Ben was planning an entrée choice for his next visit—in 2051?

Wednesday morning we were turned around, very gently that is, in the revolving restaurant atop the Hyatt. While we munched on French toast and breads and sipped our coffee, we viewed Kansas City and environs and discussed gesneriads. I had a pleasant conversation with Ingrid Lindskog of the Swedish chapter and found out that Swedes are not overly fond of competitive flower shows. Nonetheless, plans were moving ahead for their show in August. By the time you read this, Vivian Scheans, Ben Paternoster and Robert Hall will have been there, judged and been treated to a whirlwind tour of sites of horticultural and botanical interest in Sweden.

The rest of Wednesday was a series of meetings starting with Dr. Miriam Denham's judges workshop on horticulture. I'm sure that for many of us Dr. Denham's lecture was a refresher course and served to make important connections between what plants do and need to survive and how we grow

specimen gesneriads. At the same time, Ben Paternoster was challenging judges preparing for the test with several assignments dealing with the collections class of a gesneriad show.

Between the judges' workshop and the Judges' Interest Group meeting, I took a detour to meet with other chapter presidents and Jon Dixon, then AGGS President. Although the number of attendees was small, the number of ideas discussed was not limited. I came away with a few ideas on how to improve my chapter's business meetings. More chapter presidents, or their representatives, should attend these meetings. Later in the afternoon, I attended the Judges' Interest Group meeting where there were lively discussions concerning the horticulture and artistic/arts divisions of the show schedule and the artistic score sheet. Then a quick visit to the Internet/Gesneriphiles meeting and some more information gathering at the Newsletter Editors meeting.

After a quick bite to eat for dinner (no Lidia's that night), Convention attendees gathered on the terrace for the welcome reception hosted by the Heart of America Chapter. This was a chance to socialize before the next round of activities, beginning with the yearly meeting of the Gesneriad Hybridizers' Association (GHA). This meeting always draws a large group because 1) it's full of surprises—what new hybrids will be discussed and shown? and 2) there is always a bountiful raffle of plant material. This year, attendees were not disappointed. For me, the highlight of the evening was Connie Leifeste's presentation of her *Streptocarpus* breeding program to produce a plant that will survive, possibly thrive, in arid conditions. Although weather conditions in the northeast aren't arid, we do have our stretches of hot weather in the summer and most streps suffer dearly at that time.

Thursday dawned sunny and hot, but not humid, which was a blessing. It was almost perfect weather for our trip to Powell Gardens and Longview Perennials. I think many of us were surprised with what we found at Powell Gardens—yes, there were many natural prairie plantings, but we also saw beautiful displays of daylilies and giant hibiscus, a very interesting "living wall" of succulent and near-succulent plants, a water garden with large water lilies, several specimens of *Rehmannia*, the "honorary gloxinia," and numerous butterfly-attracting plants. These were being grown in preparation for the Garden's butterfly display and were part of the "backstage" tour in the peren-



Conventioners arriving at Powell Gardens

nial prop houses. After lunch we made a short stop at Longview Perennials and, although we all knew that our own plant sale was just a few hours away, many of us felt required to stock up on perennials and annuals we just could not do without.

Up to this point, Thursday evening, that is, Convention is a breeze. After another wonderful dinner at Lidia's, the real work started. Entries ran from 6:00 to 9:30 PM, parallel with donations to the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund Auction. The entries process was helped this year by the software developed by Alan Lane which produced the entry cards and all the statistics anyone would want. But what does an AGGS conventioneer need after all this hard work? Plant sales, of course—and, having planned ahead and registered before the "early bird" deadline, I was among the (many) fortunate members let into the sales room at 10:00 PM. After dashing here and there in the sales room, my one box filled with plants, I glanced at my watch. It was only 10:15—there was another 15 minutes to go before the sales room got crowded!



Peter Shalit and John Boggan classifying Doris Brown's entries



Alan Lane, Carolyn Conlin-Lane, and Doris Brown working with the new computerized entry system



Lots of activity at the plant sale on opening night



Paul Susi



Dale Martens



Jim McKinney



Master, Senior, and Student Judges all practice at Judging School

Friday morning ... and the Flower Show must be judged. I joined the other judges and clerks for breakfast and then began the difficult process of deciding which of the excellent specimens before us deserved to be best in its class. The Convention Program indicates that judging starts at 7:00 AM and ends at 10:30—well, it never does. Once the class winners are determined, special panels of judges must then decide on the section awards, special awards and best in horticulture, artistic and arts. As a result, I missed Don Josko's lecture on Plant Rx which I'm sure was very informative. (Maybe lectures can be put on audio tape and sold to convention goers, as is done at business conventions?)

The Membership Luncheon held on Friday is the official business meeting of AGGS, at which directors are chosen for three-year terms and Awards of Appreciation are presented. This year's recipients were Jon Dixon, outgoing President, and Elvin McDonald, founder of AGGS. Jon gave a very touching speech of his experiences in AGGS since his first convention in New York City in 1981. Elvin graciously accepted his award and those present responded with a standing ovation. Jon noted that convention attendees came from 29 states and three countries outside North America—Sweden, Japan and Great Britain. I did manage to attend Jim McKinney's lecture, which he gave in a meeting room that had been transformed into a magical setting of miniature terrariums, plants and candles. I think that those who heard Jim would agree that he could convince anyone to join him in the "World of Lilliput".



The 50th Anniversary Awards Banquet

The Awards Banquet—the finish line. The Show has been judged, the awards have been determined, and the winners will now be congratulated. And that they were, with Carolyn Conlin-Lane garnering both Sweepstakes in Horticulture and Best in Show, among other award winners. AGGS's 50th anniversary was commemorated in a presentation by Elvin McDonald, which was followed by part one of the Live Auction.

Whenever I am asked to judge an AGGS Convention Flower Show, I always look forward to the judges' critique held on Saturday morning—at the cheerful hour of 7:00 AM. This year's critique was lively, as usual, with both Frances Batcheller and Ben Paternoster sharing their thoughts on both the plants in the show and some of the judges' decisions. There were 275 entries from 47 exhibitors.

Lecture-wise, I was able to catch most of Dave Zaitlin's "Fifty Year History of Sinningias". I really enjoyed seeing the historical march of *Sinningia* hybrids, and noted with pride that so many ('Tinkerbells', 'Cherry Chips' hybrids, to name a few) were produced or distributed by members of the chapter I first belonged to, the Greater New York Chapter.

For the fourth year running, I've been helping with the silent and live auctions and I've always gotten a kick out of the electricity in the air as the silent auction draws to a close. This year was no exception, with several items, notably two almost-complete collections of THE GLOXINIAN from the 60's and 70's, commanding close attention from several bidders. The deadline arrives, the silent bidding stops and the committee, ably headed by Doris Carson, tries frantically to total all the winning bid sheets, group all the items by winning bidder, prepare "balance due" list for Helen Bortvedt AGGS Treasurer, and get something to eat at the luncheon—only to go back to work with part II of the live auction.

And then—it's over. The flower show breaks down in no time, winning bidders pay for and pick up their items, last-minute purchasers scour the sales room for the one Strep or Chirita they may have missed, and I go back to my room exhausted. I used to be able to "run on empty" when I was younger, but this year it started to catch up to me Saturday afternoon when I had to start packing. Since I had the foresight to start before the delicious barbecue dinner and the Frelinghuysen party, I didn't have to worry about

staying out late to do a little more partying (as if this 50th Anniversary Convention hadn't been one big party all along). The barbecue, in historic Union Station, was highlighted by Al Buell's reminiscences and Michael Riley's slide show history of the early days of AGGS.

Watching the slides of that time, 50 years ago, made me realize how far we have come as a society. Once almost exclusively dedicated to the growing and showing of *Sinningia speciosa* varieties and hybrids, AGGS has extended its reach all over the world, wherever gesneriads grow or can be grown. Our members grow species and hybrids undreamed of by that Oklahoma teenager who wrote the letter that caught the attention of the Minneapolis housewife and freelance writer. We grow gesneriads in windows, under lights, in our gardens, in our offices—and once a year we come together to celebrate what we enjoy in common. And we have a lot of fun doing it!

Frelinghuysen — here we come!



Paul Kroll, Fay and Irwin Wagman, Bill Price leaving Kansas City
– we'll see everyone in New Jersey next year!

Black and white photos from convention courtesy of Carol Ann Bonner,
Jeanne Katzenstein, Julie Mavity-Hudson, Michael Riley, Paul Susi

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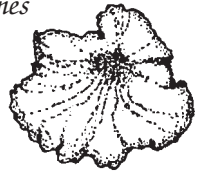
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2001 Convention Flower Show Awards

Colleen Turley <awards@aggs.org>
8404 W. Harrison Ct., Fredericksburg, VA 22407-1905

I had the honor and pleasure of presenting awards to the following people for their beautiful plants and exhibits, thanks to the generous donations of AGGS members. I appreciate every donor and would like to recognize those whose awards were not used: Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society (Best Novice Entry in Horticulture), the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Miriam Goldberg, Nellie Sleeth in honor of Gloria Kahle, the Gesneriad Hybridizers Association (Best Recently Registered Hybrid), Irwin and Fay Wagman, and Jeanne Katzenstein. These monies shall be enjoyed by the society as a whole as they will fund color photos in *THE GLOXINIAN*. Without further ado, I am pleased to report the following winners for the 2001 AGGS Convention Annual Flower Show held in Kansas City in July:

SPECIAL AWARDS

SWEEPSTAKES IN HORTICULTURE – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane for 8 blue ribbons, a cash award from the New England Chapter

RUNNER-UP TO SWEEPSTAKES – to Robert Hall for 4 blue and 6 red ribbons, a cash award from the American Gesneriad Society of San Francisco and a gift certificate from Pat's Pets

THIRD RUNNER-UP TO SWEEPSTAKES – to David Thompson for 4 blue and 3 red ribbons, a cash award from the Peninsula Gesneriad Society

SWEEPSTAKES IN ARTISTIC – to Karyn Cichocki for 3 blue ribbons, a cash award from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society in honor of Gloria Kahle and a cash award from Dale Martens

RUNNER-UP TO SWEEPSTAKES IN ARTISTIC – to Miriam Greene for 3 blue ribbons, a cash award from Carol Callaghan in honor of Laura Shannon

BEST IN SHOW – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane for *Chirita* 'Kitaguni', a plaque from the Long Island Chapter in honor of Ben Paternoster and a gift certificate from Lauray of Salisbury



Sweepstakes winner Carolyn Conlin-Lane with her Best in Show *Chirita* 'Kitaguni'



Artistic Sweepstakes winner Karyn Cichocki sporting her designer flamingo wear



×*Brigandra calliantha*
grown by Mary Bozoian
Awarded 2nd Best in Show



Sinningia conspicua
grown by Gary Dunlap
awarded Most Fragrant Flower

- SECOND BEST IN SHOW – to Mary Bozoian for ×*Brigandra calliantha*, a cash award from the Heart of America Chapter
- BEST ARTISTIC – to Fran Russom for "Rhythm", a cash award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society
- BEST IN THE ARTS – to Dale Martens for her 50th Anniversary Cake, a cash award from Hans & Everdina Inpijn
- BEST TUBEROUS – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane for *Sinningia* 'Ruffled Wood Nymph', a cash award from the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
- BEST RHIZOMATOUS – to Ben Paternoster for *Phinaea* sp. USBRG 96-336, a cash award from the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
- BEST FIBROUS – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane for *Chirita* 'Kitaguni', a cash award from the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
- BEST GROWN FOR FOLIAGE – to Bill Price for *Petroscosmea minor*, a cash award from Ben Paternoster in honor of all the exhibitors at AGGS flower shows
- BEST NEW GESNERIAD – to Vincent Woo for *Chirita* 'Cynthia', a cash award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Phyllis Rosenbluth
- BEST LESSER-KNOWN – to Maryjane Evans for *Boea hygroskopica*, a cash award from the Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society
- BEST COLLECTION – to Linda Golubski for her *Saintpaulia* Collection, a cash award from the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
- BEST ARRANGEMENT OF FRESH CUT AND/OR GROWING MATERIAL – to Karyn Cichocki for "Boogie Woogie", a cash award from Ben Paternoster in honor of all the judges, clerks, & show committees at AGGS flower shows
- BEST ARRANGEMENT OF FRESH CUT MATERIAL – to Karyn Cichocki, for "Cool Jazz", a cash award from the Gesneriad-Dicts of Western New York Chapter
- BEST ARRANGEMENT OF GROWING MATERIAL – to Fran Russom for "Rhythm", a cash award from the Grow & Study Gesneriad Club
- BEST PLANTED MATERIAL – to Fran Russom for her Tray Landscape, a cash award from the Liberty Bell Chapter in memory of Tom Seiler
- BEST PHOTOGRAPHY – to John Evans for his Color Print of *Chirita pumila*, a cash award from David, Colleen and Nolan Turley in honor of Maryjane Evans
- BEST CRAFT – to Dale Martens for her 50th Anniversary Cake, a cash award from Peter Shalit
- BEST EDUCATIONAL – to David Harris for his Educational Display of *Sinningia* and *Kohleria*, a cash award from the National Capital Area Chapter
- MOST FRAGRANT FLOWER IN THE SHOW – to Gary Dunlap for *Sinningia conspicua*, a cash award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Jim Fryer



Chirita 'Cynthia' grown by Vincent Woo
Awarded Best New Gesneriad (photo by Dale Martens)



Alsobia dianthiflora grown by Mary Bozoian
Awarded Best New World Species (photo by Bob Stewart)



Petrosimonea minor grown by Bill Price
Awarded Best Grown for Foliage (photo by Bob Stewart)



Boea hygroskopica grown by Maryjane Evans
Awarded Best Lesser Known (photo by Bob Stewart)

- BEST NEW WORLD SPECIES – to Mary Bozoian for *Alsobia dianthiflora*, a cash award from the Suncoast Gesneriad Society
- BEST MICRO-MINIATURE SINNINGIA – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane for *Sinningia* 'Ruffled Wood Nymph' a cash award from the Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter in memory of Susan Schlieder
- BEST EXHIBIT FOR OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY – to Dale Martens for her 50th Anniversary Cake, a cash award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Charles Anzalone

Division I – Horticulture

SECTION A – Tuberous Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 1 – *Sinningia speciosa* hybrid 'Diego' × 'Touch of Spice' – to Marilyn Allen, a cash award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society
- Class 2 – *Sinningia eumorpha* (white) – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society in honor of Gloria Kahle
- Class 3 – *Sinningia leucotricha* "pink variant" – to Norma Chenkin, a cash award from the Grow & Study Gesneriad Club
- Class 4 – *Sinningia* 'Gabriel's Horn' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Marty & Zelda Mines
- Class 5 – *Sinningia* 'Anne Crowley' – to Susan Grose, a cash award from the Tennessee Gesneriad Society in honor of Magdalene Lesley, senior active member of TGS
- Class 6 – *Sinningia* 'Ruffled Wood Nymph' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from Peter Shalit

SECTION B – Rhizomatous Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 8 – *Achimenes erecta* 'Tiny Red' – to Robert Hall, a cash award from the Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers Chapter in memory of Emma Lahr
- Class 10 – *Kohleria* 'Emily Roberts' – to Gary Dunlap, a cash award from Mary Bozoian in memory of Jessie Crisafulli and in honor of Tony Crisafulli
- Class 12 – *Phinaea* sp. USBRG 96-336 – to Ben Paternoster, a cash award from the New Jersey Chapter in memory of Aneilia Wisniewski

SECTION C – Fibrous-Rooted Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 15 – *Chirita gemella* – to Mary Bozoian, a cash award from Darrell Trout, Michael Riley, & Norma Chenkin in honor of Irwin Rosenblum
- Class 16 – *Chirita* 'Kitaguni' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from Darrell Trout, Michael Riley & Norma Chenkin in honor of Irwin Rosenblum
- Class 18 – ×*Codonatanthus* 'Aurora' – to Linda Golubski, a cash award from Peter Shalit
- Class 20 – *Alsobia dianthiflora* – to Mary Bozoian, a cash award from Rita Sendic in memory of Ben Sendic
- Class 23 – *Nauilocalyx pemphidius* – to Linda Golubski, a cash award from Mary Bozoian in memory of Anne Crowley
- Class 25 – *Petrocosmea forrestii* – to Robert Hall, a cash award from Peter Shalit
- Class 26 – *Saintpaulia diplotricha* Punter #0 – to Paul Kroll, a cash award from the Delaware Chapter in honor of Bessie Pyle
- Class 27 – *Saintpaulia* 'Sky Diver' – to Gary Dunlap, a cash award from the Delta Gesneriad & African Violet Society in honor of Ruth Jo McCoy, founder of Delta affiliate, and a gift certificate from Violet Ventures
- Class 28 – *Saintpaulia* 'Optimara Manitoba' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from the Long Island Chapter in memory of Rose Freiheit
- Class 29 – *Saintpaulia* 'Little Pro' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from the Pittsburgh African Violet & Gesneriad Society
- Class 30 – *Saintpaulia* 'Yesterday's Garland' – to Jeff Smith, a cash award from the Long Island Chapter in memory of Rose Freiheit
- Class 33A – *Streptocarpus* 'Waterfall' – to David Thompson, a cash award from the Greater New York Chapter in honor of Irwin Rosenblum

Class 33B – *Streptocarpus* 'Samantha' – to David Thompson, a cash award from Helen Bortvedt in honor of Edwin J. Grimstad

Class 33C – *Streptocarpus* 'Kim' – to David Thompson, a cash award from Lee Linett

Class 33D – *Streptocarpus* 'Texas Hot Chili' – to David Thompson, a cash award from the Tennessee Gesneriad Society in honor of Magdalene Lesley, senior active member of TGS

Class 33E – *Streptocarpus* 'Canterbury Surprise' – to Ben Paternoster, a cash award from Bonita Hutcheson

Class 33F – *Streptocarpus* 'Sakura' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from Lee Linett

Class 35 – *Boea hemsleyana* – to Robert Hall, a cash award from Maryjane Evans

SECTION D – Gesneriads Grown Primarily for Foliage or Fruit

Class 37 – *Episcia* 'Silver Dust' – to Robert Hall, a cash award from Dolly Crowder in memory of Marna Striepens

Class 38 – *Episcia* 'Pink Dreams' – to Doris Brown, a cash award from Marlene Beam in honor of the generosity of AGGS members

Class 39 – *Chirita sinensis* 'Hisako' – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from the Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Society in honor of Ruth Jo McCoy, founder of Delta affiliate

Class 40 – *Columnea* 'Broget Stavanger' – to Doris Brown, a cash award from the Atlanta Gesneriad Interest Group

Class 41 – *Petrocosmea minor* – to Bill Price, a cash award from the Twin Cities Chapter

Class 42 – *Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Naomi' – to Gary Dunlap, a cash award from Molly Schneider in honor of Ricky who waters her plants

SECTION E – New Gesneriads

Class 44 – *Chirita speciosa* (green leaf) – to Dale Martens, a cash award from Helen Bortvedt in honor of Edwin J. Grimstad

Class 45 – *Streptocarpus* seedling 'Helen' × *S. vandeleurii* – to Dale Martens, a cash award from Jim & Linda Golubski

Class 46 – *Chirita* 'Cynthia' – to Vincent Woo, a cash award from David, Colleen and Nolan Turley in honor of Maryjane Evans

SECTION F – Lesser-Known Gesneriads Seldom Grown or Seen in Shows

Class 47 – *Boea hygrosopica* – to Maryjane Evans, a cash award from the Atlanta Gesneriad Interest Group

Class 48 – *Paradrymonia densa* – to Bill Price, a cash award from Maryjane Evans

SECTION G – Collections of Gesneriads

Class 49 – *Saintpaulia* Collection – to Linda Golubski, a cash award from Dolly Crowder in memory of Marna Striepens

Division II – ARTISTIC

SECTION I – Arrangement of Fresh Cut and/or Growing Material

Class 58 – "Boogie Woogie" – to Karyn Cichocki, a cash award from Ben Paternoster in honor of all the judges, clerks, & show committees at AGGS flower shows

SECTION J – Arrangement of Fresh Cut Plant Material

Class 59 – "Benny Goodman" – to Paul Kroll, a cash award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society

Class 60 – "Strange Fruit" – to Pat Richards, a cash award from Michael Derksen

Class 61 – "Improvisation" – to Karyn Cichocki, a cash award from Carolyn Conlin-Lane

Class 62 – "Cool Jazz" – to Karyn Cichocki, a cash award from Helen Bortvedt in honor of Edwin J. Grimstad

Class 63 – "Hot Jazz" – to Linda Golubski, a cash award from the Atlanta Gesneriad Interest Group

SECTION K – Arrangement of Growing Material

Class 66 – "Rhythm" – to Fran Russom, a cash award from Jim & Linda Golubski

Class 67 – "Anything Goes" – to Mary Ann Bjorgaard, a cash award from Laura Shannon

SECTION L – Growing Material in a Planting

- Class 68 – Terrarium (straight-sided) – to Miriam Greene, a cash award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society
- Class 69 – Terrarium (curved) – to Miriam Greene, a cash award from Helen Bortvedt in honor of Edwin J. Grimstad
- Class 70 – Tray Landscape – to Fran Russom, a cash award from the Twin Cities Chapter
- Class 71 – *Chirita linearifolia* – to Carolyn Conlin-Lane, a cash award from Ben Paternoster in honor of all the judges, clerks, & show committees at AGGS flower shows
- Class 73 – Other Container Planting – to Miriam Greene, a cash award from Dave & MJ Tyler in honor of Jon Dixon's term as President

Division III – THE ARTS

SECTION N – Photography

- Class 75 – Color Transparency of *Gloxinia purpurascens* – to Dale Martens, a cash award from Ben Paternoster in honor of all the judges, clerks, & show committees at AGGS flower shows
- Class 76 – Color Print of *Chirita pumila* – to John Evans, a cash award from David, Colleen and Nolan Turley in honor of Maryjane Evans
- Class 77 – B&W Print of *Smithiantha* 'Big Dots Rule' – to Dale Martens, a cash award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society

SECTION O – Crafts Representing Gesneriads

- Class 79 – *Saintpaulia ionantha* cross-stitch – to Bob Clark, a cash award from David, Colleen and Nolan Turley in honor of Maryjane Evans
- Class 80 – 50th Anniversary Cake – to Dale Martens, a cash award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society

Division IV – COMMERCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL

SECTION Q – Educational

- Class 83 – Display of *Sinningia* and *Kohleria* – to David Harris, a cash award from the Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers in memory of Dale Munger and deceased members of 3Gs
- Class 84 – Display of Calyx Double *Sinningias* – to Dale Martens, a cash award from Ben Paternoster in honor of all exhibitors at AGGS flower shows



Display of *Sinningia* and *Kohleria* by David Harris
awarded Best Educational Exhibit

In the Beginning ... There Were Gloxinias!

Michael Riley <riley2362@aol.com>
101 West 104th Street, New York, NY 10025

(A talk given at the closing dinner of the AGGS 50th Anniversary Convention in Kansas City. The talk was illustrated with many original slides taken in the 1950's by Albert Buell.)

Whenever I speak to a group about gesneriads, I always start with a photo of a Florist Gloxinia and say "In the beginning ... there were Gloxinias". It establishes a recognizable concept and frame of reference for everything that follows. It is admittedly my concept, but it is not a solitary concept—in fact, it is the reason that The American Gloxinia & Gesneriad Society exists today, in this time and place.

The first time I heard Elvin McDonald speak, 25 years ago, he explained that he loved Gloxinias because they were such graphic flowers, no matter what the color or pattern; it was simply an exciting concept to know that one could grow and bloom such wonderful flowers. He was not alone in feeling that excitement; his inspiration was shared by thousands of other growers through his magazine, *THE GLOXINIAN*, and his organization, The American Gloxinia Society.

Other groups existed during this time, in the early 1950's, for enthusiasts of begonias, roses, hemerocallis, and assorted other horticultural interests. It seems that the post-war years of the mid to late 1940's had produced, not only a baby boom, but also a new interest in horticulture; particularly growing plants indoors, on windowsills, in greenhouses and under artificial lights.

Liberty Hyde Bailey established the The Bailey Hortorium at Cornell University in 1935 with the purpose of bridging the gap between horticulture as an applied science and botany as pure science. Their public face, and academic publication *Baileya*, did not emerge until 1953, but Dr. Harold E. Moore Jr. and Dr. Robert E. Lee, among others, became more than professors of knowledge to their students—they were every gesneriad's best friends. Horticulture was not only popular to home hobbyists, it was a science and an industry. Not since the days of Louis van Houtte in Belgium, in the mid-to-late 19th Century, had such popular interest been so evident.

In Connecticut, Albert Buell found his inspiration in a Florist Gloxinia during the early 1940's; he gave up a career in a woodworking shop to pursue his passion for a deep purple slipper Gloxinia and a big round speckled one. His "giant-flowered" hybrids quickly became widely known and grown. Other hybridizers and growers added fuel to the fire such as Antonelli Brothers in California and Jack Sweet at Earl J. Small's in Florida. It may have seemed that Elvin McDonald invented the Florist Gloxinia, but in reality, he simply created a "feeding frenzy", not unlike the popularization of tulips and many other horticultural manias throughout history.

The members of the American Gloxinia Society grew many other plants, some gesneriads and some not. A very early letter to the Editor asked if "there could please be a Round Robin on a subject other than raising gloxinias". As important a tool of communication as was *THE GLOXINIAN*, members still needed to communicate one to one. Round Robins were initiated within the first year; and hundreds of members quickly joined on a

variety of topics. With such a demand for growing, members needed something to grow. So, also within the first year, Elvin provided three selections of seed, two of gloxinia hybrids and some *Streptocarpus* from a Dutch source. A year later, the Pollen Bank and a Seed Fund were established which ultimately offered 21 species of gesneriads plus a wide assortment of other plant material.

Florence Carrell was in charge of the Seed Fund and wrote a column entitled *The Armchair Explorer*. She seems to have not spent much time in her armchair, but was always traveling, writing and searching for seed to offer the membership, something like a hybrid between Maryjane Evans and Jeanne Katzenstein. Florence Carrell had "collectors" in many countries and she once wrote about her discovery of two new species, *Nautilocalyx lynchii* and *N. forgetii* ... exhibited at a Livestock Show in Los Angeles. The pages of *THE GLOXINIAN* tell us that Elvin was growing such exotic gesneriads as *Ramonda myconi*, which although in cultivation since 1604, had not really ever been grown and "talked about". This was true of much of the plant material that our members grew.

An examination of the show schedule for our first convention in 1954 shows an interesting assortment of what was being grown. There were 13 classes for Hybrid Florist Gloxinias, 5 for other species *Sinningia*, 1 for "Gloxinias of Botanist" (presumably meaning "real" gloxinias although it seems that only *Gloxinia perennis* was in cultivation), 20 classes for *Episcia*, 1 class for "Bigeneric hybrids" (Stroxinias — *Streptocarpus* × *Gloxinia*), 1 class for *Streptocarpus* species, 1 for Weismoor hybrids, 1 for other *Streptocarpus* hybrids, a class for *Didymocarpus*, 3 species of *Rechsteineria*, 5 *Kohleria* species and 1 hybrid class, 3 *Chirita* classes (all annuals), 6 *Columnnea* classes, 3 species of *Aeschynanthus*, 5 *Smithiantha* classes, 1 *Hypocyrtia* (*Nematanthus*), 1 *Achimenes*, 2 *Alloplectus*, 12 *Saintpaulia* classes, a dishgarden class and 7 classes for arrangements, including "button garden" and "spoon garden". The structure for awards was somewhat similar to today, and the judging must have been a complex process. The names of the plants seem interestingly archaic by today's nomenclature. Some names were stuck in a time warp and others changed daily. The show attracted over 2000 people, and Albert Buell spoke for over two hours on "Growing Gloxinias". This public interest or "stirring of the pot" by the members of The American Gloxinia Society seems to have raised the consciousness of both the world of botany and horticulture.

The show schedule for the second convention listed 79 varieties of Florist Gloxinias by name, plus a similar assortment of other classes. Everybody grew Gloxinias, by every means possible and using every technique imaginable. There were infinite articles on raising Gloxinias from seed, growing them in dishpans, in casseroles, rooting them in glass jars and in plastic wrap, Co-editor Peggie Schulz even grew them in a "leaky fish mold"—they were gorgeous, no doubt. Members wrote about their soil and soil-less mixes, and one 1954 article sounds suspiciously like what we today call "Texas potting". Cultural problems came in many forms, from bud blast, to thrips, to fungi. One of my favorite titles of an article was "*Crown Rot ... or What?*" Whatever the problem, *THE GLOXINIAN* was the place to find the answers.

Many plants other than Florist Gloxinias were grown and written about—*Episcias* were extremely popular and J.B. Reark of *Fantastic Gardens*

frequently introduced new cultivars such as *Episcia lilacina* var. 'Mrs. Fanny Haage', named in honor of his wife's grandmother. Interestingly to me, it was exactly at this point in time that, as an 8 year old child, I was sitting at my grandmother's kitchen table in Indiana, eating cookies after school, and admiring the "flame violet" that she grew in her east kitchen window, full of bright orange flowers and dark velvety leaves. I had my priorities, even then

Elvin and Peggie and Vera Dillard and Al Buell and many others not only wrote for THE GLOXINIAN, but also produced a steady stream of articles in other magazines, such as *Horticulture* and *Popular Gardening*. They spoke frequently to garden clubs all over the world about growing gloxinias and other plants. Peggie Schulz's 1953 book, *Gesneriads and How to Grow Them* was the only such publication, and an absolute must for every grower. The first AGS chapter formed was the Chicago Gloxinia Society in 1953. Two Kansas City chapters were soon to follow, and within a year or so, the South African Gloxinia Society. Meetings were usually in people's homes and programs were sometimes just reading a chapter from Peggie's book, or "How I Spent My Summer Vacation ... visiting somebody's collection of Gloxinias!" Many members propagated their plants for exchange and or sale because there were few commercial growers of such specialty plants, other than gloxinias. Elvin frequently traveled to meetings and made a point of knowing everyone, and being known by everyone. His journalistic style of creating a whirlwind of facts and ideas in the readers' minds worked to perfection. In July of 1953 he announced that Paul Arnold was gathering material on the little known genus *Achimenes* and anyone with information should contact him. At the same time, Poncho Harrison in Mexico was working on an *Achimenes* article, and ... by the way, if you happened to be in Hawaii, Bill Sutton, the head gardener at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, invited any AGS member to stop by and visit. The 7th AVSA convention reported ten *Episcias* and four *Gloxinias*, not a very good showing in Elvin's mind. He had become the "Gloxinia Connection". The pages of THE GLOXINIAN were an endless source of fact and entertainment that left the reader in breathless anticipation of the next issue.

When Peggie Schulz wrote a guide to growing 25 different gesneriads, she consulted heavily with Dr. Moore to get the names correct. She regarded these 25 gesneriads as being among the 110 known species of 85 genera. Today we estimate 3700 species and 147 genera in the family. It seemed then, that some of the botanical names were getting straightened out; however, there was also a discussion about using only popular names in order to attract the public. Montague Free suggested in 1954 that *Episcias* be known as "Pixies".

Peggie Schulz wrote some excellent articles on hybridizing and introduced her new \times *Gloxinera rosea* var. 'Rosebells'. It was the first of many such "intergeneric" hybrids between *Sinningia* and *Reichsteineria*. In 1955 our Armchair Explorer, Florence Carrell, explained that she had been collecting gesneriad seed since 1946 from Austin Smith in Costa Rica and regularly supplied Dr. Moore so that she, and he, could get the names straightened out. Meanwhile she was writing to friends in New Zealand for seed of *Rhabdothamnus solandri* and confessed that she wondered if *Stroxinia* was really anything other than a slipper *Gloxinia*. She sent another of her collectors to find a yellow-flowered *Tussacia* in Central America—he couldn't find it, but her Panama collector sent seed initially identified as *Alloplectus*



Elvin McDonald



Peggie Schulz



Dr. Hal Moore



Dr. Robert E. Lee



Albert Buell

"Our magazine is the voice of the novice, the professional, the horticulturist, the taxonomist, the propagator, the industry, the hybridizer, the botanist, the collector, the traveler, the grower of gesneriads" said Michael Riley on the occasion of our 50th Anniversary in Kansas City. These pages honor many of the people who have contributed so much to the society and to our magazine. Only a few of the early contributors are pictured here –



Diantha Buell

- 1977 - Paul Arnold
Charlotte Rowe
- 1978 - Frances Batcheller
Carol Saylor
William Saylor
- 1979 - Florence Messick
Mel Sater
Martin Tanner
Renee White
- 1980 - Albert Buell
Erica Clayberg
Emma Lahr
Ruth & Lyndon Lyon
- 1981 - Alice Courage
Helen Kavanaugh
Henry Peterson
Laura Progebin

- 1982 - Michael Kartuz
- 1983 - Dr. Robert E. Lee
Dr. Margaret H. Stone
- 1984 - S. Cleopatra Kohm
David R. Masterson
Martin Mines
- 1985 - C. A. Cruikshank
Lee Linett
Dr. Laurence E. Skog
- 1986 - Margaret Belanger
Jimmy Dates
Isla Montgomery
- 1987 - Joseph Batcheller
Ted Bona
Ruth Webster
- 1988 - Maryann Delaune
Felicia McCann
Dr. Hans Wiehler



William Saylor



Vera Dillard



Will Mitchell



Bruce Thompson



Bill Hull



Paul Arnold



Dr. Carl Clayberg



Florence Messick



Irwin Rosenblum

these pictures having all appeared in the pages of THE GLOXINIAN in years long past. Acknowledged also are the many, many others who have helped to keep our organization vital and progressive through our first 50 years ... and all those to come.

Listed below are Recipients of Awards of Appreciation, recognized by AGGS for accomplishments of merit.



Lyndon Lyon

1989 - Judy Becker
Anthony Crisafulli
Jessie Crisafulli

1990 - Chris Kunhardt
Michael Riley
Nellie Sleeth
Ellen Todd

1991 - Earl Deroche
Molly Schneider
Alan Wojcik

1992 - Diantha Buell
Anne Crowley

1993 - Stanley Schwartz
Margaret Waugespack

1994 - Jeanne Katzenstein

1995 - Mary Bozoian
Ben Paternoster
Monte Watler

1996 - Celine Chase
Betty Tapping
Beth Weissman

1997 - Maryjane Evans
Ron Myhr
Darrell Trout

1998 - David Turley
M.J. Tyler
Dave Tyler

1999 - Dr. Miriam Denham
Bonita Hutcheson
Elizabeth Varley

2000 - Marlene Beam
Ingrid Lindskog

2001 - Jon Dixon
Elvin McDonald



Dr. Hans Wiehler



Dr. Laurence Skog



Charles Marvinny



Tom Talpey



Michael Kartuz



Frances Batcheller

schmilii and "now one of our members, Mr. Dale Denham of Boulder, CO has definitely established that this plant is actually *Tussacia Friedrichsthaliana* or *Chrysothemis Friedrichsthaliana*". She notes that "the flowers are short-lived but hybridizers overlook such shortcomings, and, the African Violet growers are looking to get some yellow into their hybrids. This may be the answer." (*This point was illustrated in the presentation by a slide on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, photographed and with a handwritten label by Dr. Dale Denham, 1955.*)

PEG, as Peggie Schulz had become known in her column called "Seasonally Yours", introduced *Sinningia pusilla* saying—"it looks too fragile to touch". She also explained that *Sinningia Maximiliana* is now *Sinningia eumorpha*. Alfred Byrd Graf, author of *Exotica* (yet to be released), introduced in the pages of *THE GLOXINIAN* a new gesneriad called Brazilian Edelweiss. He had discovered it in the window of a florist shop in São Paulo; it was thought to be a *Corytholoma* or *Rechsteineria* and was known locally as Queen of the Cliffs. This plant caused quite a lot of excitement at the International Flower Show in New York and was later officially described and published in the pages of *THE GLOXINIAN* by Conrad Morton of the Smithsonian as *Rechsteineria leucotricha*.

In 1955, the Gulf Coast Gloxinia Society with Jack Sweet, was on TV in Florida. In *THE GLOXINIAN*, Peggie Schulz devised a registration form and criteria for registering "gloxinias of horticulture and other gesneriads with the exception of Saintpaulias". This included a point system for judging. Paul Arnold was later to announce that this system was invalid since it wasn't consistent with the system for International Registrar that appeared later, in 1956. How astute of Ms. Schulz and her committee to recognize a need for registration and guidelines for naming of new hybrids.

In 1954, The American Gloxinia Society was incorporated and Bylaws were finally published. The Executive Board consisted of the Editor, co-editor and assistant editor and ... officers currently in office. They, in turn, elected the President, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer—a unique form of democracy, but ... it worked. The first financial statement showed about \$600 in the bank. The first President's Message was a farewell from the first President, Vera Dillard, and the second was a welcome by President F. W. Mitchell who listed among his objectives for the future ... yellow Gloxinias and African Violets, orchid-shaped Gloxinias and to "get the taxonomy cleared up". Names you might recognize from the 1957 membership roster included Dale Denham, Michael Kartuz, Lyndon Lyon, Elena Jordan, Harold Epstein, Irwin Rosenblum, 41 members from Canada and 36 international members.

If you thought that John Boggan fabricated the existence of "fragrant gesneriads" a few years ago, there is an article on Fragrant Gloxinias by Sister Teresita in May 1957. Fragrance of other gesneriads was often mentioned by Peggie Schulz and in 1959, new member Michael Kartuz of New York wrote a letter to the Editor to say that he detected a faint fragrance in his gesneriads, but he had told no one except his mother about it.

In 1957 MacMillan released *African Violets, Gloxinias and Their Relatives*, by Harold E. Moore Jr., with illustrations by Marion Ruff Sheehan. It cost a hefty \$10, but was filled with information and wonderful line drawings and color illustrations, reported by all to be well worth the price. Dr. Moore autographed books at the 1957 International Flower Show in New

York, while Al Buell sold gloxinias upstairs, and an information booth for the American Gloxinia Society was staffed by Paul Arnold, President Will Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Thompson (he would later become President), Jean Boggs of Nashville (editor of *The Gesneriad Journal* for the newly revived American Gesneria Society) and Irwin Rosenblum (future Editor of TG, frequent contributor of articles and future organizer of the Greater New York Chapter). 150,000 people visited the show.

Albert and Trudy Buell hosted the 1957 annual convention in Eastford CT. Speakers came from Cornell, visits were made to the University of CT and Al Buell guaranteed 20,000 blooming plants. The Sunday agenda began with a church service. Mr. Buell delivered all that he promised.

Bruce Thompson became the President in 1958. The membership roster included Florence Messick (later to become Editor of THE GLOXINIAN) and Mrs. Joseph D. Batcheller of New Hampshire. Ernesta Ballard wrote a number of excellent articles for THE GLOXINIAN. Mrs. Ballard became the Director of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Philadelphia Flower Show and published a wonderful book, *Garden In Your House*. I recall my first visit to a Philadelphia Flower Show in the 1980's where I recall her competitive exhibit of a small bonsai growing on a large flat rock with a miniature *Sinningia pusilla* blooming under the tree. Mrs. Ballard was a blue-ribbon grower.

Back to 1958, Elvin is married, living in New York, and is the Editor of *Flower and Garden*. Their apartment is on the top floor; it has no furniture, but excellent windows and light for plants. Edith McDonald becomes the Secretary-Treasurer and seems to handle the publications orders, among other things. The McDonalds host a meeting in their apartment for 18 AGS members who might be interested in starting a chapter. Another meeting is scheduled for January of 1959 and announced in the NY Times; 48 people attend, not in the McDonald's apartment. An April meeting is held at the New York Botanical Garden; 60 people attend and the Greater New York Chapter was born. Al Buell spoke on "Growing Gloxinias to Perfection". It was noted, "Mr. Buell exhibited considerable stamina in answering questions for over two hours". Gloxinia seedlings were given to all members and 15 plants of *Rechsteineria leucotricha* were distributed. The lecture and meeting were meticulously recorded in the handwritten notes of Diantha Brown.

In 1959 and '60, Elvin got busy ... busier than usual, he had a baby. He enlisted the help of a Managing Editor and welcomed Elaine Cherry as Advertising Manager (she would soon become the Editor). Peggie Schulz completed another book—*How to Make Money from your Home Greenhouse*. Michael Kartuz became Associate Editor of THE GLOXINIAN and wrote many articles for the magazine about growing new plants, such as *Trichantha minor*, as well as cultural articles on everything from bud blast and potting mixes to growing in a greenhouse. Maude Cogswell also contributed many fine articles and noted that her *Pentstemon* turned out to be a *Gesneria cuneifolia* according to Dr. Moore ... her *Lysionotus serratus* bloomed and although she was disappointed in the flowers, she noted that the roots got very fleshy almost like a bulb or a fat kohleria rhizome, and ... that a mole ate her *Loxostigma Griffithii*.

The 1961 membership roster listed Charles Marvinny (later to become President), Adele Zemansky (later to become Treasurer), Miriam Goldberg, Joan Faust, Jim Wyrzten, Mrs. Charles Webster, Mrs. Erastus Corning II,

Charles Marden Fitch, and Dr. Thomas Talpey of Puerto Rico (later to become President), among others.

I'm going to skip the next 40 years in chronological detail, but certainly not in content. The unwritten chapters of this history exist in the minds of everyone who was ever a member. The major contributions of people such as Carl Clayberg, Albert Buell, Bob Lee, Cornelius Ackerson, Paul DeChenes, Michael Kartuz, Miriam Denham, Frances Batcheller, Irwin Rosenblum and many others really demand their own chapter. The importance of this brief recollection however, is to remind us that the mobility and purpose of this organization were extremely well founded during those first ten years. Over the past 50 years, Presidents and other officers have come and gone ... some of them really good and some ... less so. The officers probably reflect the ambiance of the times more than a response to any grand plan for botanical peace in the world. Our better officers have been those who responded to the needs of the members and never lost site of the fact that they were themselves members with the same interests and purpose. Our Editors have been the most stable members of our organization. It was necessary—they had deadlines! THE GLOXINIAN is the consistent communication among our members. Our magazine is the voice of the novice, the professional, the horticulturist, the taxonomist, the propagator, the industry, the hybridizer, the botanist, the collector, the traveler, the grower of gesneriads. We are forever indebted to the Editors of THE GLOXINIAN.

We are fortunate that technology has provided us with an additional tool for communication—the Internet. The AGGS web site has exposed us to over 100,000 people. Our enhanced ability to convey education and conduct business via the Internet was unimagined 50 years ago. David Turley is certainly the Wizard at the end of our yellow brick road. Gesneriphiles, the Internet discussion group mothered by Norah Otto, is so heavily utilized that it is difficult to keep up with. Someone recently posted an accounting of those individuals who had posted the greatest quantity of messages to the list—I will not enumerate, but I do wonder when they possibly have time to water their Gloxinias!!!

I am not attempting to review the history of AGGS Shows and Judging tonight. We have seen from the origination of Peggie Schulz and her committee to implement judging standards for gloxinias that when a need arose, it was answered. Many members pursued the task of devising a structure and method for objective flower show procedures. Among them were Al Buell, Bruce Thompson, Olive and Bill Hull, Jim Wyrzten, Frances Batcheller and Ben Paternoster. It is another one of those evolving processes which no single person invented, but collectively. The AGGS method of competitive flower show judging is copied rigorously by other horticultural societies and major flower shows, because ... it works. It works because of the knowledge behind each judge and the objectivity of the method. Indeed, the world thanks Frances and Ben and their long line of predecessors for their dynamic contributions.

There has never been any doubt as to the value of the AGGS Seed Fund, and it was a delight to see the energy and enthusiasm of Florence Carrell renewed in Maryjane Evans. Maryjane rebuilt the Seed Fund from a few offerings to nearly 700 species and hybrids, an invaluable resource utilized by most botanical gardens worldwide, as well as a major attraction to new growers and members. Bob and Carol Connelly and Maryjane will remind

me, to remind you, that we must never forget that this Seed Fund is an exchange and the viability of the Fund depends on each member of AGGS as its resource. It must never falter.

When the American Gloxinia Society was 3 years old, the membership was over 2000. The profile and numbers of our members have changed considerably, but the most interesting demographic over the 50-year period is the diversity of the growers and enthusiasts. I have been asked why we retain the word "American" in the name of our society when in fact we are so international. I reply, "Because—that is where we started, in the Americas". I cringe when someone uses the term "foreign members". Foreign to me means "strange", and if our membership is strange, then I am proud to count myself among them. AGGS membership and participation has always been without continental or national boundaries. One of our first chapters was in South Africa and our current largest chapter is in Sweden, thanks to the efforts of a woman who has single-handedly reforested the botanical gardens and homes of all Scandinavia—Ingrid Lindskog. The minor barrier of language seems of little importance in a world of Latin binomials, and I'm sure that Arleen Dewell would like nothing better than to welcome new chapters in Japan, Australia, Great Britain, or any other part of the world. Our society has always represented a "meeting of the minds"; a collaboration of scientists, horticulturalists and hobbyists, we have never been a society of "amateurs". It bothers me when I visit the New England Flower Show where the entire horticultural competition is labeled—Amateur Horticulture. Such fine efforts deserve higher recognition.

When I became Business Manager, in 1982, we were struggling each year to balance the budget, to pay the escalating printing costs of the magazine, to not lose money on conventions and a lot of other similar financial concerns. When I became President, I decided that maybe I should use the "power" to improve that situation. We obtained 501(c)3 status from the Internal Revenue Service so that contributions to AGGS could be tax deductible for individuals. Then I invited our then-Treasurer Nellie Sleeth up to a revolving cocktail lounge with velvet wall-covering and beaded lampshades. After a good stiff drink, I timidly proposed the idea of establishing an endowment fund. She responded, "We should have done that a long time ago!" Not only did she embrace the idea, she already knew where the seed money would come from and exactly how it might work. All we needed was a "Frances Batcheller", and a Molly Schneider to develop the program for fund-raising. All parties graciously complied, the Board approved, and they truly altered the course of AGGS. Molly and Doris, and everyone who has ever contributed to the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund, have accomplished a major feat in the future of this organization. You have afforded us the luxury of imagining a better time and place. Last year your Board of Directors was so impressed by the possibilities that an endowment fund affords, that they provided a financial endowment to the Elvin McDonald Research Fund whereby the gains from the capital in that fund will provide a continual source of funding for research projects each year in the future.

You ask me what I want for this organization, what I see for the future? I see a day when instead of worrying about the cost of dues to our members we can say "Anyone who wants to grow gesneriads—come join us". I see a day when we continue to publish the highest quality magazine of any such organization in existence without worrying about the cost of the paper it is

printed on. I see a day when we can distribute our educational message, whether via THE GLOXINIAN or the Internet, to the entire world. I see a day when we can spend our time determining which, or how many of the worthy research projects AGGS should fund. I see a day when our Endowment and Research Funds can support our dreams. This day is not so far away. We all just need to go home and make sure that there is a bequest included in our wills for AGGS ... as well as for the family poodle and the nephew who doesn't even know how to spell GESNEROID. Your foresight will afford the future of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society.

The purpose of my research into the history of this society was to uncover the motivation of our originators. What I found was a complex evolution of resources that only had a beginning. The American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, as we know it this day, will change tomorrow—it will change with the addition of every piece of knowledge, it will change with every new issue of THE GLOXINIAN, it will change with the addition of every new member, it will change with the creation of every new hybrid, it will change with the production of every new seed capsule—it will change and evolve.

You ask me about the future of our society? I can only tell you that the future is excitingly unimaginable—like discovering a new species, or anticipating the opening of a new flower bud, or germinating a new seed. I look forward to sharing that adventure with you.



2001 Kansas City Convention attendees – photo by Julie Mavity-Hudson

AGGS 50th Anniversary Membership Pins

Michael A. Riley <riley2362@aol.com>
Chairman of the AGGS 50th Anniversary Committee
101 West 104th Street, New York NY 10025

In the very early days of the American Gloxinia Society, a membership pin was created and made available for sale to the membership. It was gold based, with a red enameled flower depicting a florist gloxinia. The pin could be inscribed for presentation to officers of a chapter or with little attachments, like a gavel for president, etc. The first AGS President, Vera Dillard, was even presented the same membership pin with a diamond set in it—where, oh where, might that pin be today?



The Anniversary Committee of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society and your Board of Directors felt that it would be nice to recreate the membership pin in a slightly different version for presentation as a gift to all AGGS members in honor of our 50th Anniversary. Carol Ann Bonner designed an all-gold pin, the first of which was presented to our Founder, Elvin McDonald at the AGGS Convention in Kansas City in July.

We are in the process of distributing the pins through chapters and direct mail—they are not available for purchase. We are using the July 2001 membership roster as a means of identification and address. You should have received your pin by the middle of October 2001, not with this issue of THE GLOXINIAN, but under separate cover. If you did not receive it by this time, please contact me at the above address. We do hope that you will wear it with pride and ask your friends to join us in membership, to celebrate the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society's 50th Anniversary.



AGGS Presidents Jon Dixon, Lee Linett, Susan Grose, Michael Riley



Sinningia 'Ruffled Wood Nymph' grown by Carolyn Conlin-Lane
Awarded Best Tuberos (photo by Dale Martens)



Saintpaulia Collection grown by Linda Golubski
Awarded Best Collection (photo by Dale Martens)



"Rhythm", Arrangement of Growing Material, exhibited by Fran Russom
Awarded Best Artistic (photo by Jeanne Katzenstein)



Phinaea sp. USBRG 96-336 grown by Ben Paternoster
Awarded Best Rhizomatous (photo by Julie Mavity-Hudson)

Special Contributions

Paul F. Kroll, Corresponding Secretary <pfkroll@worldnet.att.net>
4325 Two Rod Road, East Aurora, NY 14052-9693

FRANCES BATCHELLER ENDOWMENT FUND — \$235

Sandy Officer

Jill Fischer

Marcia Belisle, in lieu of presentation fee from the Twin Cities Chapter

F. Eleanor Mattaliano

Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter

Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Chapter

Frances Batcheller, in memory of Jim Fryer, in memory of Jessie Crisafulli

ELVIN McDONALD RESEARCH ENDOWMENT FUND — \$315

Sandy Officer

F. Eleanor Mattaliano

Vancouver African Violet & Gesneriad Society

Ellen Brooke

Leslie D. Cox

Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Chapter

Michael Riley, in lieu of speakers fee from the Long Island Chapter

Mary Weber, in memory of Audrey Moe

Paul Cummiskey

Paula Whitlock

Michael Riley, in memory of Jim Fryer, in memory of Jessie Crisafulli

FUND FOR PROGRESS/COLOR PHOTO FUND — \$2,090

Sandy Officer

Alison E. Lovell

Karyn Cichocki, in lieu of speakers fees from the Long Island and Greater NY Chapters

Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter, in memory of Nell Wisniewski

Soili Damm

Betsy Gottshall

Gussie Farrice, in lieu of speakers fee from the Greater New York Chapter

David Sheppard

Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter, in lieu of speakers fees to chapter members

Carolyn Ripps, in lieu of speakers fee from the Greater New York Chapter

Laura Shannon, in lieu of speakers fee from the AV Club of Morris County, NJ

Rosalind Gold

Bonnie Reed

Dawn Mlodoch

Long Island Chapter

Tampa Bay Chapter

Board Members, in lieu of expenses — Bob and Carol Connelly, Arleen Dewell,
Jeanne Katzenstein, Paul Kroll, Ben Paternoster, Peter Shalit, Dee Stewart,
Colleen Turley

Suzie Larouche <suzielaro@sympatico.ca>
 20 Carlton, Suite 828, Toronto ON, Canada M5B 2H5

Few people are still around to tell us how things were in the first few years of the Society. This last convention in Kansas City boasted three early members who were kind enough to share memories of the first few conventions.

Of course, Elvin McDonald was there. He provided an answer to a question I raised several months ago: were his mother and sister, who attended the first convention, gesneriad growers? Now we know they weren't. They were there for no reason other than that young Elvin, at 17, was way too young to go to a convention on his own. This year's convention attendees will certainly agree that parents still ought to keep a close watch on their teenagers.

The guest speaker at the first convention in 1954 was Albert Buell who was then starting a tradition of attending all AG(G)S conventions. He kept up his attendance for an incredibly long time and missed only two—while his wife, Diantha, was too sick to come or for him to leave her. But he was back last year, and then again this year. His body may be frail, but his mind is still sharp and his reminiscences of people he met through the Society could fill a book.

As for Dr. Miriam Denham, she did not participate in the first convention, but she remembers the second. With three young children in tow—she is still thankful to her stepmother-in-law for keeping an eye on them while she was attending—she needed careful planning. Miriam did not know at the time what a Smithiantha was, but she certainly remembers how many blossoms there were on Mrs. Dillard's at that flower show. Fortunately for us, the young mother has learned a lot about gesneriads and other plants, too. So much so, in fact, that she gave a special judging school workshop at this convention on the elements and their effects on plants—a highly technical lecture that required intellectual gymnastics from speaker and attendees.

We only hope that when the hundredth anniversary convention comes around, someone in attendance can rise and say: "I was there in 2001 and I remember those people who saw the beginnings of our Society".



Miriam Denham
(still teaching)



Elvin McDonald
(still growing)



Albert Buell
(still speaking)

Awards of Appreciation

Molly Schneider

608 Hillwood Dr., Nashville, TN 37205-1314

A maximum of three Awards of Appreciation certificates are presented each year at the Annual Meeting. Criteria for the selection of recipients include importance of service rendered, length of service, charring of projects, diligent behind-the-scenes work, faithful contributions of gesneriad articles in publications, and any other accomplishments of merit. Our two recipients this year easily meet the requirements having served AGGS for many years.

Elvin McDonald was fourteen years old when he founded the American Gloxinia Society in 1951. He is now Senior Staff Editor of *Traditional Home* magazine and America's first Gardener Laureate. In the First Quarter 2001 issue of THE GLOXINIAN, Elvin remembers, "It's true, I was only 13 years old when my failures and frustrations with growing Florist Gloxinias drove me to send a letter to the editor of *Flower Grower* magazine inviting any reader interested in forming a society to get in touch." His interest in Florist Gloxinias started with a 1949 article on Albert Buell in *Flower Grower*. Then with the help of Peggie Schulz, he started the society and its magazine in 1951. By 16 he was representing AGS at various meetings in the U.S. spreading Gloxinias and inspiration to many people. Over the 50 years since beginning TG and AGS (now AGGS), Elvin has had experience with several magazines as garden editor and is the author of more than fifty gardening books. In 1998 he was named to the Garden Writers Association of America Hall of Fame. Elvin has been a leader in American Horticulture since 1951 and is considered a foremost gardening life authority. Precocity in horticulture and journalism led to formal training to be an opera singer, but he has always worked as a journalist, more recently gaining a reputation for garden design and garden-style decorating. His international reputation as a gardener is exceeded only by his passion for growing people, for finding, nurturing and putting talent together. With *Traditional Home* since 1995, Elvin now lives in Des Moines, Iowa. His garden was featured in the May 2000 issue, and Elvin was quoted as saying, "This garden combines all the things I love most".

Jon Dixon of Woodside, California has been a member of AGGS for over 20 years and attended his first convention in 1981. He is a member of the American Gesneriad Society of San Francisco, of which he has been president and held other positions, as well as a member of the Peninsula Chapter. Jon has served as a Director, Chapter and Affiliates Chair, and has just completed a four-year term as President of AGGS. In these positions, Jon has fulfilled a goal to spread the word on gesneriads, expand the interest in our plant society and obtain more members. He has done this by writing articles for THE GLOXINIAN and by his participation in the AGGS website and Gesneriphiles discussion groups answering "zillions" of email questions on gesneriads. Jon has won several flower show awards including Best in Show with *Sinningia leucotricha* in San Mateo, as well as Best Educational Exhibit. A graduate of the University of Berkeley with a Masters in Landscape Design, he is now working as an independent architect. In 1995, he received an award in landscape design from the American Institute of Architects East Bay Chapter. Jon has been involved over the years with many plant societies—orchids, bromeliads, palms, rock garden, cactus and succulents, and the California Horticulture Society. He has done extensive

hybridizing with many plants, especially *Sinningias* and *Abutilons*. His first interest in horticulture was in his early teens when at a nursery with his mom he picked out a succulent collection costing 25 cents, but admits his mother took care of them. Now at his home in Woodside, Jon has plants everywhere—a large greenhouse, six shade houses, lights stands, plant benches outside and even gesneriads up and down the sidewalk.



Elvin McDonald and Jon Dixon

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Written by Ruth Jo McCoy and first made available in 1985, this book begins with the use of gesneriads in design, goes on to cover mechanics, supplies, types of arrangements (including container gardens), treatment of plant material, and concludes with design basics and judging of design. It includes many line drawings, humorous cartoons and a limited number of color photographs.

This soft-cover 110-page book is now available from AGGS Publications for the special price of \$7.50, which includes U.S. shipping. (International members please include 20% additional for shipping to Canada and Mexico or 20% (surface) or 40% (air) to all other locations. Send your order for this unique reference book today to:

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Botanical Review Committee — Report #23

John Boggan <jkb25@cornell.edu>
Dept. of Botany, NHB 166, Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20670

Although the Botanical Review Committee does not normally review websites, an online reference that has made the work of the Botanical Review Committee much easier and may be of interest to AGGS members has recently appeared on the Smithsonian Institution's Department of Systematic Biology/Botany website. The newly updated *Annotated Bibliography of the Gesneriaceae* by L.E. Skog and J.K. Boggan can be found at <<http://persoon.si.edu/gesneriad>> and should be an invaluable reference tool for botanical researchers and anyone else who is interested in the botanical literature on Gesneriaceae. The Bibliography is up-to-date (generally to within the last 6 months), with over 2,700 fully searchable citations. The articles themselves are not available online, but can be ordered from your local public library via interlibrary loan.

Not included in this Botanical Review report is the important 1998 series of articles published in *Beiträge zur Biologie der Pflanzen*, vol. 70, by A. Weber, B.L. Burtt, et al. dealing with various Old World genera, particularly *Didymocarpus*, *Didissandra*, and related genera. These articles have already been summarized separately in a series of articles in THE GLOXINIAN by A. Weber and B.L. Burtt.

Akeroyd, J., 1998. *Haberlea rhodopensis*: a classic Balkan endemic. *New Plantsman* 5: 5-9. Illustrated.

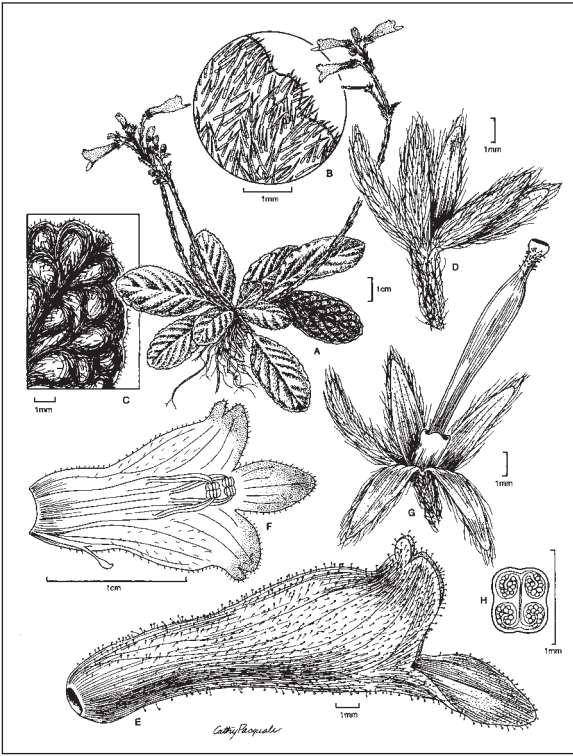
Haberlea rhodopensis is endemic to the Balkan Peninsula, an area with a very interesting flora and high degree of endemism. The species is named for Bulgaria's Rhodope Mountains. A description of the plant is given, along with notes on culture and propagation. Its conservation status is discussed. Although the species is not endangered in the wild, its presence is indicative of habitats that merit conservation.

Burtt, B.L., 1998. The disposal of two unnecessary names in *Aeschynanthus* (Gesneriaceae). *Edinburgh Journal of Botany* 55: 486-487.

Two names described in *Aeschynanthus* by F. Kränzlin in 1928, known only from a single poor specimen of each, are referred to other species. *Aeschynanthus setosus* Kränzlin is a synonym of *A. gracilis* C.B. Clarke, and *A. consobrinus* Kränzlin is a synonym of *A. maculatus* Lindley.

Wang Yin-Zheng, Gu Zhi-Jian, & Hong De-Yuan, 1998. Karyotypes of *Whytockia* (Gesneriaceae). *Acta Phytotaxonomica Sinica* 36: 28-35. Illustrated.

Chromosome numbers vary greatly within the tribe Klugieae, and frequently within the genera. The genus *Whytockia*, with 6 species (all endemic to China), is considered the most primitive member of the tribe on the basis of morphological data. Chromosome numbers were established for *Whytockia bijieensis*, *W. hekouensis*, *W. purpurascens*, *W. tsangiana* var. *tsangiana*, and *W. tsangiana* var. *wilsonii*. All were $2n = 18$. It is suggested that $x = 9$ is the primitive basic chromosome number for tribe Klugieae.



Paraisometrum mileense W. T. Wang
 Illustration from Novon, Vol. 7, No. 4, p 433, 1997

Weitzman, A.L., L.E. Skog, Wang Wen-tsai, Pan Kai-yu, & Li Zhen-yu, 1998 ["1997"]. New taxa, new combinations, and notes on Chinese Gesneriaceae. *Novon* 7: 423-435. Illustrated.

Preparation of the Gesneriaceae for the Flora of China has revealed new taxa, including one new genus, *Paraisometrum*; thirteen new species among the genera *Chirita*, *Didymocarpus*, *Hemiboea*, *Opithandra*, *Oreocharis*, and *Paraisometrum*; and seven new combinations in the genera *Chirita*, *Hemiboea*, *Lysionotus*, *Oreocharis*, *Paraboea*, and *Tengia*. The new taxa are described, discussed, and compared with related taxa. The transfer and status changes are justified.

Welsh, S.L., 1998. Gesneriaceae, pp. 114-121. In: *Flora Societensis. Orem, Utah, U.S.A.: E.P.S., Inc.*

Descriptions are given for the 16 species of *Cyrtandra* found on the Society Islands (which include Tahiti), with a key to the species. All the species are endemic to the Society Islands, and each is usually found only on a single island. Some of the species are known only from the type specimen. The genera *Achimenes* and *Episcia* are also found on the islands, where they have escaped from cultivation.

Gesneriad Register

Judy Becker, Registrar <jbecker@mohawk.net>
432 Undermountain Rd., Salisbury, CT 06068-1102

The following registrations should be added to the Registered Gesneriads List found in Appendix C of the 1990 Gesneriad Register:

00736	<i>Aeschynanthus</i> 'Red Sails'	<i>A.</i> 'Black Pagoda' × <i>A. evrardii</i>	R. Stewart
00737	<i>Drymonia</i> 'Francisco Pizarro'	<i>D. ecuadorensis</i> 'Indian Sunset' × <i>D. killipii</i>	R. Stewart
00738	<i>Streptocarpus</i> 'Chrissy'	(<i>S.</i> unnamed red hybrid × <i>S. vandeleurii</i>)	J. Ellis
00739	<i>Sinningia</i> 'Ablaze'	<i>S.</i> 'Sun Blaze' × <i>S. cooperi</i> hybrid	C. Rampton

Descriptions are as follows:

***Aeschynanthus* 'Red Sails'**, 2000, IR00736, Robert Stewart, MA. (Hybridizer W. Saylor). (*A.* 'Black Pagoda' × *A. evrardii*). Date of cross, planting and first bloom unknown. Reproducible only vegetatively. Plant growth upright to spreading, stems reaching 20 cm. Leaves smooth, green above, dark oxblood red below, 9 cm × 3 cm with 1 cm petiole, elliptic with entire margin, acute tip and cuneate base. Calyx fused, yellow to red, 2 cm long, pedicel 2 cm, with many flowers at tips of stems. Corolla 6 cm long, slightly bent at open end, tapering from 5 mm at base to 10 mm at opening, RHS Red 46A (Currant Red). The outer and inner surfaces of each lobe have a single dark stripe up the center; the inner surfaces also show a dark V combined with the stripe to give an arrowhead pointing outwards, with some yellow enclosed in the arrowhead.

***Drymonia* 'Francisco Pizarro'**, 2000, IR00737, Robert Stewart, MA. (*D. ecuadorensis* 'Indian Sunset' × *D. killipii*). Cross made Feb. 1982. Reproducible only vegetatively. Large, upright, reaching 1 m in height. Leaves hairy, matte green with lighter veins above, oxblood red with light green veins below, 20 cm × 10 cm with 5 cm petiole, elliptic with entire margin, acute tip and cuneate base. Calyx leafy, light green, 3 cm long, pedicel 2.3 cm with several flowers per leaf axil, including leafless sections. Corolla salverform, 7 cm (including the spur) × 4 cm, tube white outside, inside RHS Yellow-Orange 14B with red-purple stripes. Outside of lobes white, with some show-through of color from inside. The inside (display side) of lobes RHS Purple 78C (Aster Mauve) at margins, tending toward RHS Red-Purple 74C (pale Cyclamen Purple) further in, and even more reddish as it blends with yellow-orange of throat.

***Streptocarpus* 'Chrissy'**, 2000, IR00738, James Ellis, GB. (*S.* unnamed red hybrid × *S. vandeleurii*). Cross planted Feb. 1999, first flowered Mar. 2000. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Rosette. Leaves smooth, glossy green, 25 cm × 8 cm, elliptic with crenate edges, acute tip and cuneate base. Calyx fused, green, 1 cm long, 5-7 flowers per 16 cm peduncle. Corolla salverform, 4-5 cm × 4 cm, pale pink with dark markings in throat. Available from hybridizer.

***Sinningia* 'Ablaze'**, 2000, IR00739, Colin Rampton, Australia. (*S.* 'Sun Blaze' × *S. cooperi* hybrid). Cross made March, 1999, planted July, 1999 and first flowered November 2000. Plant growth upright, 15" or 380 mm tall. Leaves mid green, 5" (125 mm) long and 4" (100 mm) wide, elliptic. Calyx split, dark red, 3/8" (5 mm) long. Pedicel 1" (25 mm) long. Corolla hooded, 2-1/2" (55 mm) long, 3/8" (10 mm) wide.



Aeschynanthus 'Red Sails'



Drymonia 'Francisco Pizarro'



Streptocarpus 'Chrissy'



Sinningia 'Ablaze'

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As this report goes to press, the Kansas City Convention will forever remain in our memories as a great convention. If you were not able to attend, we missed you. Those that participated in the silent and live auctions will have planted their leaves and/or rhizomes and will be watching the plants grow that were purchased at the live auction,

This year we had some unusual plant material donated. Tim Anderson donated a collection of twelve Chirita plants in addition to a collection of twelve large, healthy Kohleria rhizomes. Bob and Dee Stewart donated a *Negria rhabdothermoides*. This plant and the one still owned by the Stewarts are the only two known to be in cultivation. Mary Bozoian's donation of a collection of five different *Petrocosmea* plants added to the bidding fun. Dale Martens had a large basket of *Streptocarpus* leaves that everyone wanted. Jeff Smith donated seven envelopes of *Streptocarpus* 'Canterbury Surprise' hybrid seeds — I'm sure the seeds have already been planted. High bids were given for a private tour of the flower show conducted by the knowledgeable Frances Batcheller. Priceless antique gesneriad illustrations were donated by Michael Riley and Dave Zaitlin. Albert Buell donated an Earl Deroche painting of the small chapel on the bayou that many of us saw while on tour at the New Orleans convention. It was through one of our live auctions several years ago that Albert originally purchased the painting for \$280. WOW!

My special thanks to Paul Susi, Daphne Yaremko, Doris Brownlie, Tom Bruning, Bill Price, Molly Schneider, and Suzie Larouche who worked so hard to make the auction a success. We made a great team.

Another BIG thank you to the bidders and the donors for your invaluable contributions—without you we would not succeed. Year after year you have graciously given. This year we had 191 items given by the following 47 donors, resulting in \$4500 being added to the Fund:

Tim Anderson	David Harley	Dave Zaitlin
Frances Batcheller	Jo Hawley	Cheekwood Botanical
Marcia Belisle	Jeanne Katzenstein	Gardens
John Boggan	Paul Kroll	Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Carol Ann Bonner	Connie Leifeste	Gesneriad Society
Mary Bozoian	Dale Martens	Gesneriad Hybridizers
Albert Buell	Elaine Niece	Association
Doris Carson	Toshijiro Okuto	Island Treasures,
Norma Chenkin	Bill Price	Staten Island, NY
Bob Connelly	Michael Riley	Kartuz Greenhouses
Carolyn Conlin-Lane	Carolyn Ripps	New England Chapter
Leslie Cox	Vivian Scheans	of AGGS
Jon Dixon	Carol Schreck	Soil Service Garden Shop,
Maryjane Evans	Peter Shalit	Kansas City, MO
Gussie Farrice	Jeff Smith	Tennessee Gesneriad
Gayle Gill	Bob and Dee Stewart	Society
Robert Hall	Fay Wagman	
Steve Hall	Vincent Woo	

This was my last convention to serve as Chairperson of the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund. Your new Chairperson is Paul Susi who has worked hard at every convention to help make the auctions a success. Please support Paul in his endeavors to keep this Fund healthy and vital. Thank you.



Doris Carson counting the seconds down to closing the silent auction

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Update — Chapters and Affiliates

Arleen Dewell <arleendewell@home.com>
#311-2366 Wall Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V5L 4Y1

What an extraordinary 50th Anniversary Convention experience! The Heart of America Gesneriad Society was our Host Chapter and words cannot express what an exemplary job was done in welcoming every Convention attendee to Kansas City with broad smiles and open arms. Many thanks to President Nancy Moerer, her energetic Committee of Five and all the Chapter members for orchestrating such a memorable event for us all!

It was wonderful to see Kazuo Horikoshi and Toshijiro Okuto again this year, both of whom made the long journey from Japan to Kansas City. We also met Bob Counsell from North Somerset, England for the first time. Bob is a delightful person who belongs to the British Streptocarpus Society which boasts 500 members in Britain! He brought many impressive photographs of his lovely Streptocarpus plants and garden for us to drool over. How about forming AGGS' second European chapter in the UK, Bob?



Bob Counsell enjoying all the beautiful streps in the plant sales room

Speaking of European chapters, it is always a treat to visit with Ingrid Lindskog, President and fearless leader of Gesneriasts of Sweden. Ingrid has more energy in her little finger than I will ever have over my lifetime! Not only does she preside over the day-to-day functioning of AGGS' largest chapter, which is over 350 members strong, she also has a hand in the production and English translation summary of their beautiful Swedish-language journal, *Gesneriastnytt*. Thank you, Ingrid for responding to my request to



Streptocarpus 'Canterbury Surprise' grown by Ben Paternoster
Awarded Best in Class 33E (photo by Bob Stewart)



Streptocarpus 'Samantha' grown by David Thompson
Awarded Best in Class 33B (photo by Julie Mavity-Hudson)

receive chapter publications. If any of you would like to subscribe to *Gesneriastnytt* complete with English language summary, contact Michael Riley, AGGS Business Manager for details. The photographs alone will blow you away!

I also enjoyed meeting and chatting with David Harris, Earlene Crow and Annie Osterhowse, members of the Northwest Arkansas Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society. This new chapter received its charter at Y2K in Tampa Bay, and it was gratifying to see many of them attending Convention this year.

I am happy to report that I have received a number of enquiries from many of you interested in forming AGGS Chapters. Hector Wong has been hard at work in Honolulu producing culture leaflets and holding plant sales and displays introducing gesneriads to the people of Hawaii. He even rented one of AGGS' Slide Programs on Convention 1999 in Nashville to show at an event held in May. How about a future AGGS Convention in Honolulu, Hector? Paul Kroll tells me that The African Violet Society of Western New York is keenly interested in becoming a new Chapter and will likely proceed in 2002 under their new name, The African Violet and Gesneriad Society of Western New York.

When I returned home from Convention, there was an enquiry waiting from Debbie Weinman in Tucson, Arizona. She says there are many growers like herself in the Tucson area who have evolved from growing mainly African violets to respect "the wonder of all Gesneriads"! Once again, I am delighted to hear from anyone, anywhere, anytime who needs help or advice about joining AGGS as a new Chapter or Affiliate. I am only a mouse click away via e-mail and of course, would love to hear from you via regular mail, too.

After two years as your Chairperson of Chapters and Affiliates, I have to admit that, hands down, the most enjoyable and rewarding part of my job is welcoming new Chapters to the AGGS family. This year at our Golden Anniversary celebration, it was a special honour and privilege to present a Charter to Bill Price, President and Marilyn Allen, Vice-President of the Vancouver African Violet and Gesneriad Society in British Columbia, Canada. AGGS continues to thrive and currently is 35 Chapters strong. Thirty are in the continental U.S., four are in Canada and one (our largest) is in Europe. Can Great Britain and Japan be far behind?

If you have Internet access, visit the AGGS website at <aggs.org/chapter.html> to find out if there is a Chapter close to you or write to me. Did you know that Chapters may list their meeting dates, education topics and contact persons on our website at <aggs.org/extras/meeting_announce.html>? Looking for free advertising of your upcoming shows? You can post the *who*, *where* and *when* details of your show and also a contact person at <aggs.org/events.html>. No internet access? No problem. Send your Chapter's show date and contact information via regular mail to Jeanne Katzenstein, Editor of THE GLOXINIAN, for the Coming Events column. Remember to check out her copy deadlines for each issue, listed on page 3 of the magazine. Last but far from least, if your Chapter changes its President, don't forget to notify me—your friendly AGGS Chapters and Affiliates Chairperson! Don't be shy—**Help us grow by joining or forming a Chapter!**



Arleen Dewell presenting the new Charter to
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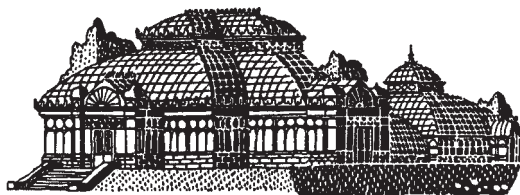
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×*Achimenes* 'Golden Jubilee' grown by Dale Martens

The Gesneriad Hybridizers Association sponsored a special contest this year to choose the best new hybrid to represent the 50th Anniversary of AGGS. There were 23 entries from 8 hybridizers. Chosen by popular vote, the winning plant will now be called ×*Achimenes* 'Golden Jubilee'. It is ×*Achimenes* 'Inferno' × self and was grown by Dale from the single seed produced by this intergeneric.

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Coming Events

October 20-21 — Illinois — Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society fall display and sale at the Friendship Park Conservatory in Mt. Prospect. Saturday and Sunday 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm. Contact Susan Bradford (847-740-7801).

October 26-27 — New York — 48th annual NYSAVS Convention "Violets on the Wild Side" at the Ramada Inn in Schenectady. Contact Edward Bradford (718-847-9854).

November 3-4 — New Jersey — TriState African Violet Council 40th annual show and sale "Say 'I Do' to Violets" at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 53 East Hanover Ave., Morristown. Saturday 1:30 to 5:00 pm; Sunday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Contact Dale Jasaitis (609-298-7333) <wand72@home.com>

November 9-10 — North Carolina — Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society 2001 Convention at the Sheraton 4 Points Hotel in Raleigh. Open to the public Friday 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm; Saturday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Contact Libbie Glembocki <Libbie@attglobal.net>



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