



CURRIER MCEWEN, M.D.

1902 - 2003

THE SIBERIAN IRIS

FALL 2003

SOME OF DR. MCEWEN'S SIBERIAN INTRODUCTIONS

EVER AGAIN '92
(S. Whitney)



IRISH MIST '00
(C. Fulton)



HARSPWELL VELVET '91
(C. Fulton)



BUTTER AND SUGAR '77
(unknown)

THE SIBERIAN IRIS

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 6

FALL 2003

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This issue's lovely front cover was photographed by Yves Vandamme. If this photo looks familiar to some, it was also used in the program book of the Beardless and Borderless Siberian/species convention. The convention was dedicated to Dr. McEwen, "The father of the modern Siberian iris".

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Time certainly flies when you are having fun. My three-year term as president of SSI ends January 1st when Dr. E. Roy Epperson assumes the presidency. He has been the force behind many of the accomplishments made in the last three years and will be an outstanding leader. My entire executive board has been fantastic.

The Society also owes a great deal of appreciation to Linda Doffek for her willingness to step into a membership nightmare and organize our files and get our membership list into a useable format. She has passed the job on to Susan Grigg who will now continue to keep us up to date. The membership chairman is often the first link to a group and is crucial to continued success.

Hats off to the "Beardless and Borderless" committee! What a fine job they did on organizing a most enjoyable and successful convention in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Mother Nature decided to hand many of us an extremely late bloom season, but we saw the early varieties and saw beautiful clumps ready to burst forth. The time spent with other beardless enthusiasts was well worth the trip.

It is impossible to have a message that does not mention the loss of a great hybridizer, Currier McEwen at the tender age of 101. Those of us lucky enough to have known him will always be inspired by his love of Siberian and Japanese irises and his will to ever improve on the varieties available. Tetraploidy was born in Siberian irises because of his determination and his introductions will stand as a tribute to Currier forever.

I love growing Siberian irises in my garden and promoting them to others. Siberians are one of the best landscape plants available. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your president.

Carol Warner

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2003 AIS SIBERIAN AWARDS

MORGAN-WOOD MEDAL

CARELESS SALLY - 82 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

Runners-up:

SPRINKLES - 81 votes

(Bob Bauer & John Coble)

MESA PEARL - 64 votes

(Bob Bauer & John Coble)

SIBERIAN - Award of Merit

WHERE EAGLES DARE - 65 votes

(Calvin Helsley)

SHIPS ARE SAILING - 63 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

Runners-up:

CARMEN JEANNE - 61 votes

(Calvin Helsley)

SOMEBODY LOVES ME - 58 votes

(Robert Hollingworth)

SIBERIAN - Honorable Mention

TOM SCHAEFER - 84 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

BANISH MISFORTUNE - 60 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

STRAWBERRY SOCIAL - 49 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

SARAH TIFFNEY - 38 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

HARPSWELL LOVE - 34 votes

(Currier McEwen)

LAKE SENECA - 34 votes

(Dana Borglum)

SUMMER REVELS - 31 votes

(Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

Runners-up:

IN FULL SAIL - 30 votes (Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks)

CHINA SPRING - 29 votes (Bob Bauer & John Coble)

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REMEMBERING CURRIER

by Sharon Hayes Whitney, Maine

“To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides.” David Viscot

On Monday, June 23, 2003, the oldest resident of Harpswell, ME, Osceola Currier McEwen, MD, passed on.

Born in Newark, NJ on April 1, 1902, he was the son of George Floy McEwen, MD and Mary Antoinette Currier McEwen. Currier graduated from Newark Academy in 1919, and in 1923 from Wesleyan University with a B.S. degree Magna cum laude and membership in Phi Beta Kappa. He then attended NY School of Medicine, receiving his MD in 1926 at the age of 24.

After completing his internship and residency at Bellevue Hospital, Dr. McEwen joined the Rockefeller Institute where he worked for four years--(1928-1932). Dr. McEwen was Dean of the New York University Medical School from 1937 to 1955--a total of 18 years, with an interruption of three years in military service overseas (1943-1946). In 1944 he was appointed Chief Consultant in Medicine for the European Theatre of Operations. He received the Bronze Star and was discharged a full colonel in January 1946. As Dean he also served as director of NYC's medical faculty and facilities, turning NYU into one of the leading medical schools in the country. He established the Rheumatic Disease Study Group at the School of Medicine in 1932 and served as its Chairperson from 1932 to 1967. He retired from the Medical School as Professor Emeritus of Medicine in 1970 at the age of 68.

Dr. McEwen achieved international renown in his second career as a hybridizer of Siberian and Japanese irises, introducing over 160 Siberian and Japanese irises. A founder of the Society for Siberian Iris, Dr. McEwen served as president of both the Society for Siberian Iris and the Society for Japanese iris and chaired the AIS Scientific Committee.

He pioneered the use of colchicine in inducing tetraploidy in Japanese and Siberian irises. In 1962 he produced the first tetraploid Siberian iris. First generation, induced polyploids, are apt to be unstable and can revert to the diploid state. Later generation tetraploids are fully tetraploid and cannot revert. The first of these later generation

tetraploids, **Orville Fay** and **Fourfold White** were registered in 1969 and 1970, ten years after his start with colchicine. The first tetraploid Japanese iris bloomed in 1966 but success in obtaining second generation seedlings was achieved more slowly and the first tetraploid Japanese iris, **RASPBERRY RIMMED**, was registered and introduced in 1979. His work revolutionized the genus *Iridaceae*.

Currier's hybridizing goals were the same for diploids and tetraploids: strong plants with good branching; new colors and true blues, reds and pinks; attractive patterns; early, late and repeat bloomers, and the development of miniatures. He worked to produce smaller yet proportionate Siberians like the 6" tall **BABY SISTER**, and the 18" tall **SASSY KOOMA**.

Currier is best known for his Siberian iris, **BUTTER AND SUGAR**, a colorfast yellow amoena of the 28-chromosome group, that started a revolution in Siberian iris colors. Selected for introduction in 1977, it is his most widely grown Siberian iris, winning the Morgan Award in 1981 and receiving the first Morgan-Wood Medal in 1986. Currier was awarded Morgan awards for four of his other Siberian irises: **ORVILLE FAY** (1976), **SILVER EDGE** (1978), **RUFFLED VELVET** (1980) and **BUTTER AND SUGAR** (1981). He was recipient of the Hybridizer's Medal of the American Iris Society in 1976, The Foster Memorial Plaque of the British Iris Society, the distinguished Service Medal of the Perennial Plant Association in 1992, the Luther Burbank Award of the American Horticultural Society in 1999, *and others*. He was the author or co-author of over 100 articles on the subject. He wrote two books about Siberian irises. His first, 'Siberian Iris' was published by the Society for Siberian Iris. His book, "The Siberian Iris" (1996), published by Timber Press, is considered the definitive work in English on the Siberian iris.

The innovative cross border 2003 Beardless Siberian and Species Iris Convention held this spring in Hamilton, Ontario was dedicated to Currier. It was attended by iris-lovers from all over the world. The inscription above Currier's photo reads, "This convention is dedicated with great respect and affection to Currier McEwen--the 'father' of the modern Siberian iris." Currier inspired us all and will continue to inspire us to live our lives fully and joyfully with true generosity of spirit.

Currier was a regular summer visitor to Harpswell every year in his life except for a year of study in Leipzig (1930) and three years in the military service (1943-1946).

He enjoyed the fact that he was born on April 1 and loved to tell the story that after arriving three months premature his first words to his parents were, "April fool!" He was known for his generous fun-loving and hard-working nature.

June 22, 2002 was proclaimed Currier McEwen Day by Governor Angus King. The Currier McEwen Centennial Garden prepared by the Harpswell Garden Club in Harpswell Historic Park was dedicated. Our friend and community member will always have a place in the heart of his beloved Harpswell.

Currier was loved and enfolded wherever he went. He likewise loved and charmed all with his honesty, intelligence and quick wit. The most remarkable quality of our dear friend was his ability to *make each person feel special in the entire world. We all felt the truth of it, everyone felt special to Currier. Everyone was special to Currier.*

When the community of friends, neighbors and family gathered for Currier's memorial service, it was a sad time AND it was a time of celebration. His beautiful grandchildren carried Currier's spirit forward in lively stories of the adventures they had with grandpa. Their stories made Currier present to all *at the moment of telling*. It was clear how much he enjoyed them and how much of himself he had shared with them. The program for his memorial service carried within it a mistake. Currier's lifetime was listed as 1902-1903; giving him only one short year in which to fit all of his accomplishments. Currier would have laughed heartily.

Currier was predeceased by his first wife, Katherine Cogswell McEwen. He is survived by his wife Elisabeth Fulkerson McEwen; by three daughters, a son, a foster-son, six grandchildren; two great-grand children and three foster-grandchildren.

Benediction:

Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak, help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

CURRIER McEWEN - A MEMOIR

by Jennifer Hewitt, England

When the news of Currier's death came in June 2003, it felt as if a huge hole had opened up at the centre of the Siberian and Japanese iris world. In spite of knowing of his increasing physical frailty, not unexpected at the age of 101, somehow he seemed eternal. But even if he has gone, his irises, his achievements, his books, and his personality, undimmed by age, will live on.

Obituaries usually give the history of the person who has died. In Currier's case this is generally well known, not least through his writings. He has told how an iris catalogue, delivered to him by mistake, caught his fancy, how he learned from Orville Fay the use of colchicine to induce tetraploidy and applied this to Siberian and Japanese irises and, with patience and inspiration, created races which have given these groups new dimensions. And how seeds from Marjorie Brummitt began a process that produced the first yellow 28-chromosome Siberians and their child **BUTTER AND SUGAR** on which, as with the tetraploids, he and others have based later developments. These events are detailed in his articles in, among others, the 1985 *BIS Year Book*, and for his distinguished career in medicine, the 2002 *Year Book*. Much has also been written about him when he received high awards including the Foster Memorial Plaque from the BIS (1978), the Luther Burbank Award for achievements in horticulture in the USA (1995) and the AIS Gold Medal in 1999.

Currier the man may be inseparable from his successes, but it is in a personal way that I wish to recall him here, for I feel my links with him are typical of many who knew him. How our first contact occurred I can no longer remember - probably with my developing interest in Siberians in the 1970s. Perhaps I placed the first of many orders and mentioned that remontants and repeat-flowering particularly appealed to me. Whatever - it led to a stream of the friendliest, most encouraging letters, full of advice and help, gifts of seeds and plants. Currier had time and trouble to spare for everyone, beginner or experienced grower, and was as eager to learn as

he was to share his knowledge and to guide, but he never ‘talked down’ even when I deserved it for failing to understand something.

Elisabeth and Currier came to Britain (to which Currier was no stranger) for the BIS gathering at Cannington, and stayed briefly with us in Cleeton. Not only was there (for two of us) much iris talk; Currier, a true polymath, took the keenest interest in the history and buildings of Ludlow, as did Elisabeth (a charmingly shy bride at the time), and conversation on many topics never failed, nor laughter inspired by Currier’s lively humour.

In 1993 the first Siberian Convention was held in Michigan and it was clear from the way people gravitated to Currier how much he had to give and how generously he gave it. His comments on the guest irises were perceptive and made kindly with praise wherever he felt it was due. Much of the last day was spent at Bob and Judy Hollingworth’s garden, particularly among the seedling beds; Currier spotted the ‘goodies’ and interesting breeding lines, and tagging along behind him, Bob and Tomas Tamberg was an education. As it was to spend a couple of days at South Harpswell in the comfort of McEwen hospitality, meeting other family members, looking at and talking irises, eating *two* lobsters (“If you don’t eat the spare one I’ll have to and it’s bad for my digestion”), looking at the area, the lobster fishery, wild plants and cultivated ones ... He liked his dry martini in the evening; he fried bacon perfectly for breakfast. Above all, what fun it was.

I am privileged to have been there and have these memories, and those of a second brief visit, following the 1996 MASS Medley (Siberians and Species convention) at which a spontaneous round of applause greeted Currier and Elisabeth’s arrival. It was a tribute to a truly great man, not only for what he did but what he was. If there is a gap in the world for all of us who were fortunate to call him friend, how much greater it must be for Elisabeth and the whole McEwen family, who have all our sympathy.

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CARELESS SALLY

Morgan-Wood Medal Winner

by Marty Schafer, Massachusetts

CARELESS SALLY was the demure, pastel sister of a wild bunch of siblings. Among them were raucous reds with heavy veining and uneven patches of color, blending haphazardly with purple and sporting large, ruffled blue upright stylearms. There were also handsome silvery purples, magenta/blue bicolors, whites and yellows. This was an explosion of color we had not seen before. They came from the cross of a seedling called "Upright Styles" and **SAILOR'S FANCY**. "Upright Styles" had large blue and red blended stylearms, which stood straight up in the center of the flower. But its falls were dull wine-red, twisted and the signals (left exposed by the upright stylearms) were less than attractive -- a form break, but far from a perfect flower. I had crossed it with **SAILOR'S FANCY** hoping that its lovely form would give me flowers with upright styles and good form. The form did improve in the children - but with the exception of **CARELESS SALLY** - not enough. Either their standards and falls didn't go together or their ruffles couldn't decide to be large or small. They were exciting but awkward. **CARELESS SALLY'S** stylearms were not as upright as its parent, but they were on their way - very nicely shaped and ornamented with ruffles. The falls and standards were also nicely ruffled, in proportion and created a beautiful flower.

Though **CARELESS SALLY** had quiet coloring compared to its siblings we had always been attracted to it as it was also unique. We called it "The Pastel One" - it was a mix of pink, red, blue and yellow with a soft signal and aqua-ribbed stylearms. The name **CARELESS SALLY** seemed appropriate because she had the capricious habit of changing the color blends depending on the weather - sometimes more blue and sometimes more pink. We wondered where all of these color combinations were coming from. The same year that **CARELESS SALLY** bloomed for the first time we also bloomed an odd seedling which appeared to have two layers of pigment - blue over yellow. It was not pretty, but very interesting. We

called it the overlay pattern. It was not until several years later that we realized that it was this same pattern that gave the unusual coloring to **CARELESS SALLY** and her sibs and has made her children so good.

I have had several visitors snicker at her “wanton ways” for I had put **CARELESS SALLY’S** pollen on just about every flower in the field. She has been a productive and innovative breeder for yellow, overlay pattern, fullness and ruffles, size and decorative stylearms. Among her children are: **IN FULL SAIL**, **DANCE SUZY**, and **SUNNY SPELLS** for yellows; **COLD FROSTY MORNING** and **MAIRI’S WEDDING** for whites; **DROPS OF BRANDY**, **ECHO THE WIND**, and **TURN A PHRASE** for blue over yellow; and **DANDY’S HORNPIPE** the most unusually colored. There are also many grandchildren either already introduced (**JUST CRUISING**, **DANCE AND SING**, **DROWSY MAGGIE**, and **IMPRESSION**) or still coming along and great grandchildren (**SUNFISHER**).

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ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES:

Membership is open to all AIS members in the United States and Canada and to all iris fanciers elsewhere. Send your dues to our Membership Secretary, **Susan Grigg**, 105 Trotters Ridge Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614-9620; (919)870-8345; smgrigg@bellsouth.net

Dues: Single Annual	\$ 5.00	Family Annual	\$ 6.00
Single Triennial	13.00	Family Triennial	15.00
Single Life	100.00	Family Life	120.00

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MEET THE NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Hello to all of you! I'm Susan Grigg, your new membership chairman for SSI. My interest in iris had its birth in my childhood as I enjoyed the row of white and blue tall bearded blossoms that grew in my grandparents' yard. Sadly, none of the iris were Siberians. I didn't know about Siberians until the 1960s when my husband and I were given **CAESAR'S BROTHER** by my generous mother-in-law to plant in the front yard of our new house in Raleigh, North Carolina. That plant survived everything that four active children, a family of cats, neighborhood dogs, and zone 7 weather conditions could inflict on it. In fact, **CAESAR'S BROTHER** still grows in two places in our new, larger yard. We built a home eight years ago and moved some of our prized iris plants. Of course, we've discovered other Siberians, medians, Louisianas and others to add to the garden.

My husband Glenn and I are retired from working in North Carolina State Government service. Our four children have so far given us four delightful grandchildren. This summer we've been busy with the wedding of one of our daughters and my knee replacement. We're recovering from both events nicely.

I look forward to meeting many of you in person and pledge to help you with all your questions or problems concerning your SSI membership. My address is 105 Trotters Ridge Dr., Raleigh, NC 27614-9620.

E-mail = smgrigg@bellsouth.net.
Phone = (919)870-8345

Former membership chairman Linda Doffek has been most helpful to me, as has our editor, Ellen Gallagher, and our treasurer, Jim Copeland. Thank you for the opportunity to know and serve such fine people.

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New Members

REBECCA & SAMUEL BRYSON

525 Bryson Branch Road
Franklin, NC 28734

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190 River Road
Dover, TN 37058

LAURIE FRAZER

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SIBERIAN CHECKLIST

The new (2003) cumulative Siberian checklist is available by mail for \$7.00. Contact: Ellen Gallagher, 1689 Riverside Drive, Berlin, NH 03570 or e-mail: ellengalla@yahoo.com

We have Roy Epperson to thank for the wonderful job he did organizing and doing this Checklist for us!

HYBRIDIZING INNOVATION

by Jeff Dunlop, Maine

Crossing Siberian Irises on a rainy day, or even a sunny day with an afternoon thundershower, can be a great waste of the hybridizer's time if the crossed flowers are left unprotected. My experience is with Siberians but breeders of other types of Irises, or even other flowers, may also find this problematic. Usually pollen grains are washed out of the anthers and out of the stigmatic lip after a cross was made, resulting in very few or no takes under rainy conditions. In the worst case, rain for the entire season, production of most new crosses for the whole year might be lost to rain. This is an unacceptable situation for hybridizers who insist on the opportunity to make progress in their breeding work every season.

In southern Maine this season, only three or four days seemed to be lost to rain for those with unprotected crosses. We felt very bad for our friends in Massachusetts where the rain seemed to never end during June. Weather forecasts are checked here at least once a day during the bloom season and each time we viewed the regional radar, there was rain again, or the threat of rain across Massachusetts. A bad dream realized.

So what's a hybridizer to do? In the past, a common remedy to protect crossed flowers from rain has been to cover the flower with a sandwich bag with the flange cut away - a dicey proposition at best. Bags not fastened are apt to blow off during a windy rain event and bags that stay on sometimes make a very hot little hot house if the sun comes back out, tending to bake the dark colored flowers. A better, though more expensive technique is the use of many beach umbrellas as practiced by Dean Cole and perhaps others. This seems to be a relatively effective way to protect many crosses from rain, depending on the money one is willing to spend. Even these can be a "blow away" problem in heavy wind. Last year we put a makeshift tent over 1000 square feet of Siberians at peak bloom, which was very sketchy in the wind. Without doubt, other methods of protection have been tried as well. Clearly a better and more effective method would be nice, and some folks in Massachusetts might tell you fairly necessary.

On June 22, of 2002, an innovative idea was proposed. In the morn-

ing, Dean and I had been down to Harpswell making crosses on Currier's Siberians in a heavy fog, which turned to a light rain by noon. We had each made about two dozen crosses, which later in the summer produced only one good seed pod apiece, for a whole mornings breeding work. Typical results. During the ride home as we reflected on our probable bad luck, I told Dean what we need is something like a disposable plastic paint bucket fastened upside down on a dowel or rod which is adjustable in height to cover a crossed flower in the rain. Simple enough, something inexpensive but effective in keeping the flower dry. Together we talked it over and decided it just might work, then put the idea on the shelf for the rest of the season. Case closed.

Just as the 2003 season got well underway we had the potential of several rainy days on the horizon. Time to swing into action and invent, devise and fabricate a cheap working rain cover. Twenty or more of these would be even better. Actually, 28 were made and used here during June and at least 40 will be on hand next season. This will allow 20 crosses per rain day, each flower remaining covered up to 2 days.

Thinking in terms of simple and inexpensive, I decided to use 1/4" diameter pencil rod 5 feet long for the upright staff. This allows up to 1' in the ground and 4' above ground for adjusting the plastic cup to proper height. Pencil rod is the smallest steel reinforcing rod generally available in the construction industry. It comes in 20' lengths and unlike most larger size rebar is smooth on the outside diameter. Your local supplier of foundation materials will probably have a pair of bolt cutters you can use to chop up the 20' pieces to a desirable size for transport and later use. In this area a 20' piece is about \$3.10, making a 5' piece about 80 cents.

Now for the cover. Disposable plastic paint buckets were checked out at Walmart and the Sherwin Williams paint store. The 1 quart size appeared to be just barely big enough, 43 cents each at Walmart and 49 cents each and slightly thicker at Sherwin Williams, both are translucent. About 1" to 1 1/2" down from the top edge of the rim drill a 1/4" diameter hole, then using a utility knife make a 1/2" long slit from the center of the hole toward the rim. Leave at least 1/2" of plastic between the rim and the end of the slit. Now drill a 1/4" hole in the bottom of the cup where it meets the side, straight down from

the hole in the side of the cup. Two holes and a one half inch slit, and the cover is ready to be threaded on to the shaft.

Push the end of the pencil rod through the hole in the side, then through the hole in the bottom of the cup. The plastic cup should be deformed slightly at the top rim to make the cup round again, rather than oval, after inserting the rod. This produces a friction or interference fit, of the cup to rod, so the cup can be slid up or down to adjust to the correct height to cover the flower after the rod is stuck in the ground near the flower to be protected. Flowers should be covered before opening in the rain or before the rain begins if a cross needs protection later in the afternoon or evening due to upcoming rain.

This innovation is a simple two piece system, which is adjustable. The rain covers are very effective at keeping crosses dry. They also are a deterrent to foraging bees and when used on 95 degree days, kept all colored flowers cooler and vastly fresher looking than uncovered blooms. Those who are very resourceful will find that two stocks with blooms at different heights can even be protected with one cover. Minor drawbacks are rust on the steel rods and due to their conductivity, they should not be handled during lightening storms.

Crossing in the rain, even under a beach umbrella is less than perfect fun, but this idea may help produce good takes which otherwise might not be obtainable. Total price per unit is about \$1.30 for materials, plus a little gas, time and labor. So let's say an extra 2 dollars to get that really outstanding cross to take on a rainy day. Easily worth the price, which of course can be amortized. It may not be out of the question to assume there could be new believers in Massachusetts already.

Breeding Technique

Many people, including some other hybridizers, have seen my method of crossing Siberian Irises and a few have asked that I make it generally known. Now appears to be a good chance to do so. The chief attribute of this method for me is that it is relatively fast, enabling 40 or more controlled crosses in a morning. Fair to say, that other methods may be as fast for those practiced at a special technique. The average number of takes using this method with diploids is about 66% to 75%, and with tetraploids about 20% to 33%. About what might be expected with most other good crossing methods, I think.

Using freshly opened flowers up to about 2 hours old, the flower to be crossed is emasculated by removing the anthers with forceps, which is the usual practice. Flowers being crossed might also have their falls removed so foraging bees have no landing pad. This I don't always do, however it may help to avoid contamination of the cross from foreign pollen brought by the bees. Now, equally fresh anthers which are not yet dehisced, often with a piece of filament attached, are brought from the pollen parent and gently inserted top end first and pollen side down, into the stigmatic lip of the pod parent. The anthers typically are inserted about 1/8" to 3/16" into the stigma, which holds them by friction or interference. Occasionally an anther will fall out after insertion, though most often they stay in place. Anthers must be very carefully inserted so as not to rip the stigma, but a little practice makes this critical step quite easy. Once the anthers are installed the cross is left to "take" as the anther and stigma both ripen independently to full viability.

How can this work? As a general rule the anther always ripens and dehisces well before the stigmatic lip rolls down to receive pollen grains. The secret with this method I believe, is at the interface between the stigmatic lip and the anther.

Most of the pollen on the anther outside the stigmatic lip dehisces within a few hours after insertion, and most all of this may be too early to effectively fertilize the flower. The tip of the anther held inside the stigma appears to never dehisce at all. This can be observed later in the day, by removing an anther for inspection. The critical juncture then is a very small region on the anther right at the stigmatic lip, perhaps 1/16" to 1/8" long, where pollen grains become slowly exposed to air, ripening in intimate contact with the stigma as the stigmatic lip rolls down in its ripening process. Even though this area is quite small, plenty of pollen grains are available to achieve fertilization if the cross is compatible and environmental conditions are suitable.

In our collective quest for more stunning Siberians, here's to innovation.

(Ed. Note: See photos on inside back cover that accompany this article)

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ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

by Linda Rader and Gary White, Nebraska

Participants in the 2003 Siberian Species Convention were provided the extraordinary opportunity of visiting one of North America's premier public gardens, the Royal Botanical Garden in Hamilton/Burlington, Ontario. The RBG includes a sprawling 2,000-plus acres of land dedicated to both formal gardens and nature sanctuaries. The focus of our tour was the Laking Garden, RBG's showcase of herbaceous perennial plants. The garden was named in honor of Dr. Leslie Laking, and his late wife Barbara Tarver Laking. They were both instrumental in developing the design of the garden and bringing unusual plants to the notice of Canadian gardeners.

Our tour began with a bit of a walk from the bus and parking area to the main entrance of the garden. On the footbridge spanning a railroad track below, we noted train buffs waiting patiently with cameras set to catch that perfect shot of the next train. We shared a smile of relief. Irisarians are not the only fanatics around.

On the entrance path into the Laking Garden we stopped to admire the stunning display of tree peonies lining the walkway. The path led you onto a wooden lookout platform with a sweeping view of the terraced and gently sloping garden below. As predicted, there was a buzz of activity around the guest iris beds.

While waiting for the crowd to subside, we had the unexpected pleasure of meeting and chatting with Dr. Leslie Laking. Dr. Laking's 35-year career with the RBG began in 1946 with his appointment as Assistant Director of Horticulture. After 7 years at that post, he became Director of the RBG in 1954 and held that position until his retirement in 1981. In 1996, he was appointed Director Emeritus of the RBG. He was most gracious and willing to share his knowledge of the history of the garden bearing his name.

In 1946 work began and by 1948 they had moved plants into the area. The newly formed Canadian Iris Society under the early leadership of W.J. Moffat collaborated with the staff of the RBG in building the iris collection that initially included only tall bearded

irises. The collection grew and matured and in 1955 became the feature of an American Iris Society annual convention. Over the years other groups of irises have been added and the collection has grown to near 600 cultivars. There is a strong commitment to education on irises. Grouping of cultivars by decades show the changes & trends over 70 years of hybridization.

The Siberian and species guest plantings were located on the middle terrace of this extraordinary garden. Most of these irises were planted in island beds, a garden design concept first used in England by Alan Bloom and brought to North America and the RBG by the Lakings. Many of the irises were only in bud, but there were a number of the early ones in flower. Speaking of buds, possibly the most stunning clump of irises in bud we have seen was **JUST CRUISING** (Schafer/Sacks '01). We counted 37 bloom stalks on that one clump, with yellow-tipped buds ready to open. The folks who visited the RBG on the second day of tours had the pleasure of seeing some of those open flowers. All of the clumps were beautiful and well grown. There was a Schafer/Sacks Siberian seedling, **S95-90-8**, that was quite tall and exhibited pale pink standards with rose falls and yellow hafts, that was putting on quite a show. A seedling, **97/13-2**, by Jean Marc Boileau was another that we were smitten by. This one was a beautiful ruffled pink Siberian, with standards paler than the falls, almost a pink amoena. **GOSSAMER BREEZE** (Fulton '01) was in full flower, with its distinctive blue standards and pale gold falls veined blue. We were enamored by **MIRABEL GLOW** (Huber '02) a versata cross in shades of violet and mauve and by **FROST END** (Huber '02) a pseudacorus cultivar in blue and white. **BARBARA SCHMIEDER** (Schafer/Sacks '01), a yellow Siberian, had several beautiful flowers open with many more darker yellow buds. **BANISH MISFORTUNE** (Schafer/Sacks '99) and **SALAMANDER CROSSING** (Schafer/Sacks '99) were both tall eye-catching clumps in full flower attracting lots of attention. Perhaps the most spectacular of the irises on display in the guest beds was Marty and Jan's **STRAWBERRY SOCIAL** ('00). Its beautiful rosy pink flowers were a definite hit, as proven by its winning the distinction of the favorite introduced Siberian guest iris at the convention.

The tour of the Laking Garden continued as we strolled down through the extensive iris plantings of the lower terrace. Most of the irises in this area are tall bearded, but there are two 60-foot rows of older siberians in large clumps. We walked around the Siberian plantings in this section of the garden and saw a number of old favorites in nice clumps. The ones that were blooming and caught our eye were **PLEASURES OF MAY** (Schafer/Sacks '95), **SHAKER'S PRAYER** (Warner '90), **OTTAWA** (Preston '28), **MARY LOUISE MICHIE** (Miller '96), **BLUE KING** (Barr 1902), and **CHINA SPRING** (Bauer/Coble '99). **CHINA SPRING** was one of our favorites on the tour, and what a showy clump it was.

At the far end of the lower gardens, we met up with Dr. Tomas Tamberg and David Schmidt sorting out names of some of the bearded species irises. We had a chance to talk with David about the RBG and his role at the gardens. David is the Acting Manager of Horticulture and Curator of the Iris collection. He has been with the RBG since 1979. David gave us some statistics about the gardens. The RBG has a world-class lilac collection, several theme gardens such as the Rock Garden, and of course, a renowned iris collection. The RBG is involved in the Wetland Rejuvenation Project, the largest inland project of its kind in North America. The RBG operates on a budget of \$7.5 million, in comparison to about \$30 million for other similar sized botanic gardens.

As we headed back towards the bus, we stopped at one final garden area where there were several educational placards describing the various types of irises and history, such as medicinal use of irises in the past. Though we had a generous amount of time in the Laking Garden, we found ourselves bringing up the very end of the line getting back on the bus. The Laking Garden was a highlight of our trip, and we are envious of the people in the Hamilton/Burlington area who can visit it often. The Royal Botanic Garden is one of the world's great botanical gardens, and the Laking Garden within the RBG is a jewel in itself.

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DR. LESLIE LAKING IN LAKING GARDEN, RBG, HAMILTON
photo by Gary White

These two Sib. and the top two on the following page were photographed at the Royal Botanical Gardens by Bob Hollingworth.



STRAWBERRY SOCIAL
(Schafer/Sacks '00)



BANISH MISFORTUNE
(Schafer/Sacks '99)



PIXIE PREVIEW
(Hollingworth '03)



TORNADO ROSE
(Bauer/Coble '00)

*Sibs. at the AIS '03 National Convention in Virginia.
Photos by Rita Gormley.*



WHITE AMBER
(Schafer/Sacks '01)



TURN A PHRASE
(Schafer/Sacks '00)

McMILLEN'S IRIS GARDEN

by Jim Wilson, Kentucky

When convention visitors took some time to explore the commercial gardens of the McMillen family in Norwich, Ontario, they were fully convinced of the accuracy of the billing as Canada's largest iris garden. Besides a nice lawn and landscaped area with iris guests beside the hostas of a rustic barn, there were large, well-kept display gardens for viewing, and 20 acres of irises in stock gardens behind the lilac hedges and trees.

Although not offering abundant bloom while we were there, the convention guests were certainly growing well. Blooming nicely for so early in the season was *I. pseudacorus* hybrid **FOXCROFT FULL MOON**, with upright creamy-white flowers on a well-formed plant. **BANISH MISFORTUNE** led the bloom of the Siberians with tall stalks of its deep violet flowers with gleaming golden yellow signals over arched foliage. A tall Shafer/Sacks seedling S95-93-1 seemed to have some similarities to **SNOW PRINCE** with its toasty hafts and blue-gray signal veins radiating into an off-white fall. The presentation of the guests on a bed mulched with wood chips seemed to help emphasize the excellent plant habits that most had developed, and to show off the red spathes of those that had them. Many of the plants, especially the species crosses, exhibited very healthy large clumps. Beautiful stalks and buds made all of us wish we could be back in a week.

Some of our western visitors also had the opportunity to see an iris borer at work in a Siberian. Although the pest seems to have other more favored plants, it quite often can and does attack Siberians as well. Seeing the direct evidence is a reminder to those of us in borer-friendly regions to include Siberians in our spraying program.

Abundant bloom overwhelmed visitors to the tall bearded gardens. Walking the rows resulted in seeing beautiful flowers from both old and new favorites. Blooms were large—we saw some of the largest flowers I've ever seen on **BEFORE THE STORM**, for example. **STARSHIP ENTERPRISE**, **GYPSY ROMANCE** and **BRAZILIAN HOLIDAY**

were some of the other standouts among the many. Rhizomes were more deeply planted than is our typical practice in Kentucky but, for whatever reasons, the McMillen results were good. Our hosts said we'd have seen more bulbous irises, medians, and hostas had we gotten there before the mice. Problems or not, the fields were impressive expanses of color, as far as the eye could see, and the areas were separated by flowering shrubs for the birds and by ever-greens for wind protection.

Life has not been all a paradise, however. Muskrats did some damage, including a beautiful Japanese garden area, complete with gazebo. It would have included an impressive pond side planting without their intervention. Their work did, however, create a new and unique feature of floating islands of *I. pseudacorus*, sort of a flagship. **AUGURY** and **INDY** withstood the attacks and bloomed at the ports.

The production bed of Siberians showed a few more plants that were offering bloom in what turned out to be the leading edge of the season: **PANSY PURPLE**, **OUTSET**, **LYDIA WINTER**, **CAESAR'S BROTHER**, and **LITTLE TRICOLOR**.

Excellent refreshments, friendly dogs, and generous hosts all helped to make the convention visit complete, with their warm Canadian friendliness in evidence to the very end of the visit, with waves from the entire family, youngest on up, as we departed.

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CHUCK CHAPMAN IRIS

by Tom Gormley, Missouri

Chuck Chapman is the owner and operator of one of Canada's largest iris specialty nurseries. This is probably the most northern iris farm in existence, gardening zone 5b Canadian, about zone 4 in USDA rating. The farm is located just north of Guelph, Ontario with about four of the eleven acres under cultivation and about one-quarter of this is for species and beardless seedlings.

It was a clear, if chilly, day when the Beardless and Borderless Convention Tour visited the Chapmans. The very late, cold spring this year slowed down bloom time of the Guest Siberian and Species irises. There was lush foliage on **JUST CRUISING** and **BANISH MISFORTUNE** was getting ready to burst into bloom. All the Guest irises were just sitting there waiting for a couple of warm sunny days! Wish we could have gone back a couple of weeks later to see the spectacular display.

Now don't get me wrong just because there were no guest iris blooming, it did not mean there was nothing to see. In the front corner of the property, there were rows of beardless irises in full array.

NIPISON and **MY LOVE** put on a 30' long by 3' wide carpet of color while *Iris typhifolia* was showing off with multiple branches of lilac colored bloom. Halfway down the rows **CAESAR** was attracting attention by tossing up a dozen or so dark blue tailored blooms. **AUSABLE RIVER'S** lavender falls and stained glass hafts drew us right to it at the rear of the garden.

Those who took a peek at the bearded varieties were not disappointed either. A wide selection of Arilbreds, SDBs, TBs and the like were in full bloom. **WILLOW WARE** stood out, sporting delft blue falls rimmed in white and topped with white standards. **LIMESICLE**, a green SDB by Chuck also caught my eye as it really was lime green.

When the bus captain blew his whistle to gather up all the stragglers it occurred to me that this was the first iris garden where I had actually seen everything that was blooming.

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UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH ARBORETUM

by R. Dennis Hager, Maryland

When the Siberian convention irises do not cooperate and the tour buses arrive days or even weeks before bloom, it gives conventioners the challenge of finding something else to occupy their time in the garden. At iris conventions other irises often fill that void. At this tour stop, there were few other irises but there was a lot to see.

Few of us are able to keep our iris plantings in perspective of a total garden plan, allowing the irises to overwhelm. At the Guelph Arboretum, the guest irises were sited in relatively small informal beds along a path through a meadow dotted with young trees. The location and the surrounding trees that augment rather than compete with the irises made this planting ideal for enjoying the irises.

In the distance, the Japanese Garden with its bamboo walls beckoned. A broad expanse of wooly thyme interrupted only by a few rocks and a carefully pruned pine suggested the serenity within. In the Japanese garden, a row of *Iris sanguinea* was beginning to bloom. The mass of the planting overpowered the garden. It also blocked the view of the water and would have worked much better as a single clump.

The English garden was beside the Japanese garden. Though the garden was laid out formally, the plantings and maintenance were more in the style of an English cottage garden. There was a single unidentified Siberian iris in bloom, though it was obviously losing its battle for space.

Both the lilac and dwarf conifer collections were close by and a joy to see. Rarely does a gardener have the opportunity to compare so many cultivars growing in one location.

Though the guest irises were not blooming, the University of Guelph Arboretum is a place that any gardener should enjoy.

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FAVORITES AT SIBERIAN/SPECIES IRIS CONVENTION

Submitted by Carolyn Schaffner, New York - for the Convention
Committee

1.	Strawberry Social	65
2.	Banish Misfortune	49
3.	Just Cruising	41
4.	Pixie Preview	30
5.	China Spring	28
6.	White Amber	24
7.	Salamander Crossing	23
8.	Jiggles	22
9.	Barbara Schmieder	21
10.	Echo the Wind	20
10.	Gossamer Breeze	20
11.	Foxcroft Full Moon (spec-x)	18
12.	Riverdance	17
12.	Seneca Glacier Flow	17

THE 'BEST' AT BEARDLESS AND BORDERLESS

Best introduced Siberian was **STRAWBERRY SOCIAL**, Schafer/Sacks '00) a deep rosy pink. Best Siberian seedling was by Jean-Mark Boileau, Ottawa, CA with #97/13-2, a light pink. The best species was **FOXOCROFT FULL MOON**, Katherine Steele ('98), a creamy white pseudacorus with maroon eye markings. The species seedling was #95009, Tony Huber's I. versicolor, pink, purple and violet coloring.

<u>SIBERIAN POPULARITY POLL</u>	<u>2003 VOTES</u>	<u>'02 RANK</u>
1. CORONATION ANTHEM (HOLLINGWORTH '90)	18	5
2. ROARING JELLY (SCHAFFER/SACKS '92)	16	1
3. CARELESS SALLY (SCHAFFER/SACKS '96)	14	10
4. JEWELLED CROWN (HOLLINGWORTH '87)	12	2
SULTAN'S RUBY (HOLLINGWORTH '88)	12	8
5. BLUEBERRY FAIR (HOLLINGWORTH '97)	11	4
OVER IN GLORYLAND (HOLLINGWORTH '93)	11	8
SHALL WE DANCE (HOLLINGWORTH '92)	11	5
STRAWBERRY FAIR (HOLLINGWORTH '94)	11	3
6. RIVERDANCE (SCHAFFER/SACKS '97)	10	7
SHAKER'S PRAYER (WARNER '90)	10	...
7. BANISH MISFORTUNE (SCHAFFER/SACKS '99)	9	8
CHINA SPRING (BAUER/COBLE '99)	9	...
MABEL CODAY (HELSEY '85)	9	9
SHIPS ARE SAILING (SCHAFFER/SACKS '98)	9	5
TOM SCHAEFER (SCHAFFER/SACKS '00)	9	6
8. FOND KISS (SCHAFFER/SACKS '99)	8	1
MESA PEARL (BAUER/COBLE '94)	8	5
NEAT TRICK (J. WHITE '97)	8	9
SHIRLEY POPE (MCEWEN '79)	8	9
STRAWBERRY SOCIAL (SCHAFFER/SACKS '00)	8	...
TRIM THE VELVET (SCHAFFER/SACKS '95)	8	3
9. CHEERY LYN (A. M. MILLER '91)	7	8
ESTHER C.D.M. (MCGARVEY '82)	7	8
LADY VANESSA (HOLLINGWORTH '86)	7	10
LAKE KEUKA (BORGLUM '94)	7	4
SOMEBODY LOVES ME (HOLLINGWORTH '98)	7	8
10. AQUA WHISPERS (A. M. MILLER '88)	6	...
AT THE BALLETT (HELSEY '98)	6	...
FORREST McCORD (HOLLINGWORTH '83)	6	...
HARPSWELL VELVET (MCEWEN '91)	6	9
HIGH STANDARDS (HOLLINGWORTH '87)	6	...
PINK HAZE (MCGARVEY '80)	6	8
REPRISE (WARBURTON '87)	6	10
SUMMER SKY (CLEVELAND '85)	6	8

THE FOLLOWING IRISES HAD 5 VOTES EACH: CAESAR'S BROTHER (MORGAN '39), GOLDEN EDGE (MCEWEN '92), HARPSWELL HAPPINESS (MCEWEN '83), JUST CRUISING (SCHAFFER/SACKS '01), LEE'S BLUE (BAUER/COBLE '94), LEMON VEIL (BAUER/COBLE '00), PLEASURES OF MAY (SCHAFFER/SACKS '95), SALAMANDER CROSSING (SCHAFFER/SACKS '99), SILVER EDGE (MCEWEN '74), UNCORKED (SCHAFFER/SACKS '02).

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2003 POPULARITY POLL COMMENTS

Compiled by Barbara Schmieder, Massachusetts

Fifty-one people voted their Siberian Popularity Poll this year - 14 more than last year but not even close to the great vote in 2001, when 131 ballots were returned. Votes came from 23 states, Canada, England, and Russia.

Bob Hollingworth would like the number of votes increased from 15 to 20. I would like even more votes - 25. He feels, and I agree, that too many good irises don't make the list because of everyone being limited to 15 votes. Around 40 registrations and introductions have been made yearly for the past 5 years, as opposed to twenty in the years previous to that. That makes the choices very difficult. Please let Ellen know what you think about an increased number on the ballot.

For people who have trouble remembering to vote or ones who can't remember what they liked after the season is over with, here are some suggestions. First, make a note on your engagement calendar (or wall calendar) of the deadline for returning your ballot. Or, have a pot-luck dinner and invite members of SSI, with the price of admission being their completed ballot (I actually did this in 2001 but this year it didn't work!). For the second problem (remembering what irises you liked), my solution is to keep an alphabetical listing of every iris that I grow, using an 8" x 10" notebook. You can use a computer if you'd rather but we are a computer-free household and the notebook suits me fine. While the irises are blooming, place an asterisk or a checkmark beside the ones that you think are outstanding and a brief comment on why you think so. Then when you are ready to fill out your ballot, you can just refer to your list. My favorites this year - **BOOK OF SECRETS** (Schafer/Sacks '00) and **TURN A PHRASE** (Schafer/Sacks '00) got 2 asterisks!

Now for some of the wonderful comments that I got:

~ **CAROL AND KEN COLEMAN**, Idaho: We consider both **BANISH MISFORTUNE** (Schafer/Sacks '99) and **BLUEBERRY FAIR** (Hollingworth '97) to be #1 this year.

~ **RAE JOHNSON**, Michigan: **DANCING NANOU** (A. M. Miller '83) and **RILL** (Bellagamba '92) are still my top favorites for bloom, color, and growing habit.

~ **CLARENCE AND SUKY MAHAN**, Virginia: We both consider **HIGH STANDARDS** (Hollingworth '87) to be the best garden Siberian - it is as close to perfection as an iris can be. **ESTHER C.D.M.** (McGarvey

'82) is still our favorite white Siberian. And for flower arranging, the unique habit of **ANN DASCH** (Varner '78) of starting to open, and then retaining the half open bud for a day or two makes it ideal for Ikebana.

~ **JERRY HUNTLEY**, Nova Scotia, Canada: **OVER IN GLORYLAND** (Hollingworth '93) was outstanding this year with incredible bloom. **CORONATION ANTHEM** (Hollingworth '90) was the only Siberian to rebloom for me this year as of this writing (8/11/03). **SHAKER'S PRAYER** (Warner '90) and **CAESAR'S BROTHER** (Morgan '39) put on the biggest show this year.

~ **BRIAN WENDEL**, Indiana: **CHINA SPRING** (Bauer/Coble '99) was outstanding this spring. It sent up over 70 bloomstalks and bloomed over a long time. **SALAMANDER CROSSING** (Schafer/Sacks '99) had some really lovely color combinations also. **DUTCH** (Varner '84) - color really stands out - and **CARELESS SALLY** (Schafer/Sacks '96) - beautiful this year.

~ **JIM AND JEAN MORRIS**, Missouri: On the way back from the Siberian and Species Iris Convention in Canada (where we had a wonderful time in spite of sparse bloom), we stayed with Jim and Jill Copeland, where their bloom was great! Also we toured Hollingworth's and Bauer/Coble's gardens. Siberian bloom was at peak. I only wish that we could grow Siberians in Missouri like they do in Michigan. Spectacular!

~ **JEFF DUNLOP**, Maine: A good year for pod set on both open pollinations and controlled crosses in our garden this season. (I visited this garden in June for the first time and saw wonderful seedlings there and at Dean Cole's garden nearby. Remember those names - they will be introducing Siberians soon and will be a great addition to our society. Both gardens are large and the Siberians are superbly grown in beautiful settings.)

~ **ELLEN GALLAGHER**, New Hampshire: Everything did well this year! A great iris bloom season although even later than usual in Zone 3 but favorites were **LEE'S BLUE** (Bauer/Coble '94) and **FROSTED EMERALD**, (Stahly, '99) for both profusion and length of bloom.

~ **CAROL WARNER**, Maryland: Many of my favorite plants are older varieties that exhibit superior qualities year after year. They are excellent landscape plants with vigor, good foliage all season, and a prolonged bloom period.

~ **JENNIFER HEWITT**, England: This season wasn't a good one for bloom - 2002 summer too cool and wet, and too many weeds, it's amazing how the Siberians cope and that some did bloom!

~ **TREVOR COLE**, Canada: My sibs are now getting over their sulks from being moved (after too long a period) and most flowered well this year. All the new (to me) introductions that I have bought in the last two

years flowered well and made great additions. The only trouble is, I have only got half an acre, chock full of all sorts of plants and I can't bring myself to throw out varieties that I have grown for years to make room for newcomers. So, as a result, my popularity list will always be a bit behind the times. Some comments on particular ones follow: **ILLINI FLIRT** (Varner '85) - early and in bloom for 2 weeks. **LAVENDER BOUNTY** (McEwen '81) - also long blooming. **SOFT BLUE** (McEwen '79) - very early and lasted 3 weeks. **WISLEY WHITE** (Royal Horticultural Society, R. '40) - a good tall strong plant.

~ **BRUCE HORNSTEIN**, Maryland: **SPACE FILLED** (Tamberg '97) rebloomed this July with tall stalks that you would expect on May blooms - it was a wonderful surprise.

~ **M. FERGUSON**, Nebraska: A very unusual year, bloom very sparse, in fact many clumps had no bloom. Spring was cool, wet, and windy.

~ **VAUGHN SAYLES**, New York: This past season I was really impressed with Siberians that had extended bloom and I'm sure our wet summer helped in that department. **OFF SHE GOES** (Schafer/Sacks '98) and **ROSY BOWS** (Bauer/Coble '00) both put on a really nice show in my gardens. **PLEASURES OF MAY** (Schafer/Sacks '95) and **SENECA KALEIDOSCOPE** (Borglum R. '02) also performed well for me.

~ **ANNA MAE MILLER**, Michigan: I had a wonderful Siberian iris year. Had a good few hours' visit in Maine with new hybridizers and lunch with Elisabeth (McEwen). Sad that we lost Currier but such a wonderful life and what a contribution he has made vocationally and avocationally. Super fellow. Now some varietal comments: **CHINA SPRING**, early to late bloom. Good form and color. Inherits earliness from *Iris typhifolia* and improved form from **SPRINGS BROOK**. **JUST CRUISING** (Schafer/Sacks '01), good improvement of the elusive yellows which have been difficult to get wider form in this color. **PERCHERON** (Warburton '82), this is always a standout in the garden. **ROARING JELLY** (Schafer/Sacks '92), raspberry jam and red grape jelly colors makes for a standout. **FROSTED CRANBERRY** (A.M. Miller '91), unusual color. It was so much darker in cool weather. **ROSY BOWS** (Bauer/Coble '00), I like this double form very much. **ESTHER C.D.M.**, a lovely white mid season with wonderful glaucous foliage. **GLOW OF HAPPINESS** (A.M. Miller '94), opens creamy and turns white and tends to repeat. **MAGNUM BORDEAUX** (Bauer/Coble '00), big ruffled double on my want list this year. **BLUEBERRY FAIR**, nice wide, ruffled medium-dark blue. **SULTAN'S RUBY** (Hollingworth '88), has been a favorite for several years. **NEAT TRICK** (J. White '97), novelty but was a beautiful clump in a garden I visited. **MARY LOUISE MICHIE** (A.M. Miller '96), a lovely shade of pink.

~ **BOB SAWYER**, Maine: **SUMMER SKY**. This is a 1935 introduction and should have received an award somewhere along the way. Everyone who sees it wants it. It is one that stands out clear across the garden and people walk in from the road just to see it close up. **NEAT TRICK**. This is one that becomes more impressive the closer you come to it. **GOSSAMER BREEZE** (Fulton '01). This was a slow starter, but once it got going it does very well. **BLUE BRILLIANT** (Cassebeer '60). It is an old standby and always looks great. **SHAKER'S PRAYER**. It really makes a beautiful clump. **REGENCY BUCK** (McEwen '85). It is a late bloomer, but always makes an impact when it opens.

~ **MARCIA CONNOLLY**, Massachusetts: **LADY LILAC** (McEwen '91) and **SUPER EGO** (McGarvey '66) - these two look so nice together. Maybe it's because both have light standards with similar intensity lilac and blue falls respectively. (Also Magnificat uses the 2 clumps as a chipmunk blind and spends hours there.) **SASSY KOOMA** (McEwen '93) - through it was going to be a lot shorter but for the last two years it has bloomed well with a nice overall shape. **MESA PEARL** - the last one to bloom. **SANGUINEA "KOBANA"** - the first to bloom. At first I didn't like its small, strangely shaped blooms, but now I do. **JAMAICAN VELVET** (McGarvey '85) - for the last 2 years I've meant to see if **JAMAICAN VELVET** and **ROARING JELLY** blooms would look good together, but then forget to check. Maybe next year. Think they would? **SUMMER SKY** - saw it at Martha Hutcheson's garden. She said she would give me a little piece but it was a **BIG** piece. I divided it and planted one piece and potted up 5 more. Will try to winter them over in the garage for the Iris Society of Massachusetts sale. Still looking for an early white. **SANGUINEA "KOBANA"** doesn't count. I got **HARPSWELL SNOWBURST** at the auction thinking it was a white. Wrongo!

~ **WILLIAM M. RIGGS**, Minnesota: My choices for this year all had great foliage and lots of bloom. The first to bloom was **CHINA SPRING** on May 29. It was gorgeous as more and more blooms opened making a dazzling display. It beat out my earliest opener called **EARLY BLUE BIRD** which did not do well this year. June 1 **SHADOWED EYES** (Helsley 00'96) opened followed by a great display of later blossoms. **HELIOTROPE BOUQUET** (Hollingworth '86), which was planted about a foot from **SHADOWED EYES**, did not do well. The first blooms to open stuck together and were sort of dry looking. Not many buds but three later blooms were lovely. The plant foliage remained short compared to the others around it. June 10 **DREAMING YELLOW** (McEwen '71) opened but I was disappointed in its flower form. A huge clump of **VELVET NIGHT** (Edwards '61) began opening and as of this date (June 18) is still looking

great. June 14 **OVER IN GLORYLAND** opened and I fell in love with its beautiful deep velvety blue purple color, huge flower, and cream gold standards. **SPRINGS BROOK** was also looking nice. June 15 - **WHITE TRIANGLES** (Warburton '87), a lovely white, opened. June 16 - **GULL'S WING** (McGarvey '89), **SHALL WE DANCE** (Hollingworth '92), **BORBELETA** (Wadekamper '79), **LADY VANESSA** and **SPRINKLES** (Bauer/Coble '94) opened. All wonderful flowers. There were some that didn't do well for me, had one or no blooms and may have to be moved to more favorable sites.

~ **ANDREY TRESCHENKOV**, Russia: **BLUEBERRY FAIR** was the best Siberian iris in my garden this year. O, so wonderful form, ruffling and colour. And some of the best Siberian varieties were irises with simple flower forms and very nice colour combinations as: **LORENA CRONIN** (Cronin '96), **SHAKER'S PRAYER** (Warner '90), **BANISH MISFORTUNE** (Schafer/Sacks '99), **PENNYWHISTLE** (Schafer/Sacks '00), and **SARAH TIFFNEY** (Schafer/Sacks '99). They grow very quickly in Moscow. Next were some very nice blue Siberians - **WHERE EAGLES DARE** (Helsley) **TIFFANY LASS** (McEwen '90), and two Schafer/Sacks introductions - **LADY WALPOLE** ('96) and **SHIPS ARE SAILING** ('98). The best creamy Siberian became McEwen's **IVORY CREAM** ('87) with nice round and flat flowers, flaring under foliage. This iris, as many another one, I saw for the first time. The best red Siberians were **ACTIVE DUTY** (Stahly '99), **LOUISON** (Helsley '98) and **JAMAICAN VELVET** (McGarvey '85), When I saw McEwen's **HARPSWELL SNOW** '96 I understood it will be the first among white Siberians. This tetraploid variety has very large flat flowers. I saw firstly many varieties of sibtosas. The best among them in blooming was **BERLIN CHALLENGER** (Tamberg ?). **ROYAL DOLLY** (Reid '95) bloomed later (another sibtosas), but I didn't see nice flowers this year. Possibly it was the first for its color and nice flower form. And at last I saw firstly the unusual fantastic **FORETELL** (McGarvey '69). Sino-siberians grow good in Moscow but it is new iris culture for our iris growers. And many of them don't know anything about them. And I saw firstly Tamberg's sibcolor **BERLIN NETWORK** ('00) with unusual flowers. The Siberian bloom season was very late. We could see many varieties in bloom only in the beginning of July! June's weather was very rainy and cold and Siberians didn't want to put up flower stalks. This is the third summer season that we have had abnormal weather. But each year I'm waiting for the next meetings with my famous flowers. Now I'm waiting for spuria bloom. They grow good here but their blooming is not so full as in the south of U.S.A.

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IN MEMORY OF GUNTHER STARK

(Submitted by Judy Hollingworth and Lois Girton)

It was sad to hear of the death of Gunther Stark of Norwalk, Iowa. He died on June 4, 2003 after being ill for some time and under nursing-home care.

Gunther and his wife Geneva started growing irises in the 50's and were for many years regular attendees at the National Iris Conventions. His interests also included hostas and daylilies and he was a Charter Member of the American Hosta Society. His son and daughter will run Stark Gardens which is mostly involved with hostas.

Treasurer of our society for 20 years from 1973 to 1993 - he was presented with the Society's Distinguished Service Award in 1990. As was written at the time, Gunther was a quiet, unassuming man, who carried out his duties diligently and without fuss. Friend and fellow Iowan Lois Girton says that Gunther particularly enjoyed donating and buying at plant auctions. At the first Siberian Convention in Michigan he bought all the multi-petaled cultivars and that was the most excited she had ever seen Gunther!

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ADVERTISING RATES

A source list for Siberians is printed in the spring issue of TSI at a cost of \$5.00 per listing. Please send your check, made payable to the Society for Siberian Irises, to the editorial office at: 1689 Riverside Dr., Berlin, NH 03570 by February 15th of each year.

OTHER ADVERTISING RATES:

FULL PAGE COLOR (4" x 7")	\$60.00
FULL PAGE B&W (4" x 7")	50.00
HALF PAGE B&W (4" x 3 1/2")	30.00
1/4 PAGE B&W (4" x 1 1/2")	20.00

(questions write to: ellengalla@yahoo.com)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by E. Roy Epperson, Chair, Nominations Committee

The nominating committee submits the following slate of candidates for office in The Society for Siberian Irises. If approved, the term of office will be from January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2006.

- President:** Dr. E. Roy Epperson
- 1st VP (President-elect):** Judy Hollingworth
- 2nd VP:** Sandy Ives
- Secretary:** Lynda Love
- Treasurer:** Jim Copeland
- Director (for a 2nd term):** Dana Borglum
- Director (for a 2nd term):** Katharine Steele

The bylaws require that these nominations be sent to all the voting members of SSI by November 15, 2003. Publication in TSI fulfills this requirement. If no additional nominations have been made within four weeks, the slate is to be considered elected.

Additional nominations may be made in writing, signed by at least eight members “acting in concert”, that is, all signing the same nomination petition, and sent to the Chairman of the Nomination Committee by December 13, 2003 together with a letter of consent from each candidate. In this event, the Elections Committee shall prepare a ballot including all nominations, and designating those made by the nominating committee. The ballot shall be mailed to all voting members no later than January 15, 2004 with instructions for voting by mail. Ballots must be returned to the Elections Committee no later than February 1, 2004.

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DONATIONS TO THE SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

2003 Siberian-Species Convention Committee

Southwestern Michigan Iris Society

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SSI BOARD MEETING

JUNE 12, 2003, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

The executive board meeting of the Society for Siberian Irises was called to order by the president, Carol Warner at 3:15 p.m. on June 12, 2003 at the Royal Botanic Garden, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Motion for Pro tem secretary for Peter Weixlmann to act in the absence and take minutes; Unanimous, motion carried. In the absence of the secretary, Marjorie Jansen, the minutes were read as approved as printed in TSI.

Reports:

Officers - none

Nominations: Presented by E. Roy Epperson

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1st VP (President-elect): Judy Hollingworth

2nd VP: Sandy Ives

Secretary: Lynda Love

Treasurer: Jim Copeland

Director (for a 2nd term): Dana Borglum

Director (for a 2nd term): Katharine Steele

Old Business:

Editor: Complimentary issues mailed to foreign addresses are expensive. No action taken.

Popularity Polls: an orange sheet, loose inside TSI. Discussion on continuing Pop Poll annually and it was discussed whether to have it annually or possibly only on the years when we do not have a Siberian convention. No action taken.

Checklist: Roy reported they are complete and available at the convention. \$6 special convention price and \$7 shipped. Request for 3 complimentary copies for the Editorial Committee: Anna Mae

Miller, Bob Hollingworth and E. Roy Epperson.

Motion: Peter W.

Second: Jim W.

Vote: Unanimous.

Roy recommended that this be the last time historical data be published i.e. iris 30-40 years old that have never been introduced.

Recommendation accepted by the B.O.D.

The checklist will be published every 3 years. Ellen Gallagher has volunteered to be the keeper of the checklists.

Old TSI: Linda Doffek has a large quantity of old TSI. Bob and Judy Hollingworth have volunteered to take all the back issues and store them. Bob has further volunteered to act as archivist for the back issues and preserve them on disc.

New ITJ: Tom Gormley is waiting for the membership chair to change before creating new SSI Invitation to join forms. The new SSI Membership chair is Susan Grigg; she will receive all membership information from Linda Doffek.

Conventions:

2006: Portland, Oregon

2009: Minnesota, Wisconsin

Web Master:

Jim Wilson is pursuing a permanent web position for SSI. The current web site was wiped out because of server change. Jim has been researching venues and has found a range of Web Hosting Services that vary from \$2.50 per month to over \$20 per month. Jim is requesting feed back about providers for their service ability and reliability. He will find a new server and publish the new location after establishing the site.

New Business:

Dues increase: A dues increase was suggested since dues do not cover the operating costs of the Society. There was discussion and

it was decided not to increase the dues at this time. Discussion and a no vote.

Slides:

Bob Hollingworth said he had approximately 10 requests per year. New Slides received and a copy of them has been sent to England. He and Judy are currently putting together a set of historic Siberian slides to be offered for rent.

Guest Siberian Iris:

A new guideline for the receiving and hosting of “guest” Siberian Iris at AIS National Conventions was discussed. The care and treatment and the sending guest iris direct to the host gardens will be outlined and presented to the AIS Board of Directors at their fall meeting in Tucson, Arizona. Bob Hollingworth, Marty Schaffer and E. Roy Epperson will present.

Adjournment.

In attendance: Carol Warner, Roy Epperson, Jim Wilson, Peter Weixlmann, Ellen Gallagher, Judy Hollingworth, Bob Hollingworth, Andy Wheeler, Phil Cook, Debbie Wheeler.

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IN MEMORY OF CURRIER McEWEN

Gifts to the Society for Siberian Irises in memory of Dr. Currier McEwen:

Region One of the American Iris Society

Jim and Jill Copeland (MI)

Jeff and Joyce Dunlop (ME)

Andrew and Ellen Gallagher (NH)

Dave Niswonger (MO)

David and Barbara Schmieder (MA)

Ann McEwen Standridge (NC)

Gifts in memory of Dr. McEwen can be sent to our Treasurer, Jim Copeland.

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

Treasurer's Statement

By James A. Copeland

INCOME STATEMENT 2002

Income		
Ads		\$ 160.00
Interest income, net of bank charges		503.16
The Siberian Iris book royalties		308.10
Membership, checklists, bulletins		2,062.57
Slide rental, net		<u>5.00</u>
Total Income		\$3,038.83
Expenses		
Membership Chairperson expenses		\$ 131.60
Bulletins		40.26
Popularity poll		212.08
Checklist refunds		13.00
TSI publication -		
Spring 2002 Smith & Town		
Printing 685 copies	\$1,865.00	
Mailing	261.44	
Editor's expense	<u>56.81</u>	
Total		\$2,183.25
Fall 2001 Smith & Town		
Printing 720 copies	\$1,010.00	
Envelopes (1,000)	129.00	
Bulk mailing permit	150.00	
Mailing	<u>213.68</u>	
Total		<u>\$1,502.68</u>
Total		\$3,685.93
Total Expenses		\$4,082.87
Income Net of Expenses		(\$1,044.04)

BALANCE SHEET

As of 12-31-2002

Assets		
Bank Accounts		
- checking	\$3,180.18	
- savings	996.10	
Advance to Editor	<u>86.32</u>	
Total		\$4,262.60
Investments		
Certificate of deposit 1.98% APY due 9-16-04	\$7,915.29	
Certificate of deposit 2.37% APY due 10-18-04	<u>\$3,000.00</u>	
Total		\$10,915.29
Total Assets		\$15,177.89
Liabilities, Reserves, Surplus, General Surplus		
Total		\$15,177.89

THE SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

Section of the American Iris Society

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-
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2) Bill Dougherty, 7420 Concerto Curve, Fridley, MN 55432
(763)785-2543; **Wmcdougherty@cs.com**

Membership:

Susan Grigg, 105 Trotters Ridge Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614-9620;
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Nominating Committee:

1) Sandy Ives, 1077 Guertin Ave, Ottawa, ON Canada K1H8B3
(613)521-4597, **rives@rogers.com**

2) Anna Mae Miller, 1700 Bronson Way, Apt 177, Kalamazoo MI,
49009; (269)349-5934; **Irisquilt@aol.com**

Publicity: Tom Abrego

Robins: Michael Zarky, 10963 Citrus Dr., Moorpark, CA 93021;
mzarky@earthlink.net

Research/Slides: Bob Hollingworth, (same as Judy Hollingworth)



CURRIER AMONG HIS SIBERIANS

Photo by Sharon H. Whitney



**SIBERIAN SEEDLING
WITH ANTERS IN PLACE**

Photo by Jeff Dunlop



**CROSSES PROTECTED
BY RAIN COVERS ...**

Photo by Jeff Dunlop

**2003 MORGAN-WOOD
MEDAL WINNER**



CARELESS SALLY (Schafer/Sacks '96)
(Photo from Joe Pye Weed Garden's online catalog)