

**The Group for Beardless Irises of the British Iris Society**  
**Newsletter No 44 – May, 2000**

**The Group's Officers**

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Mr Ray Bomford, The Hills, Tanhouse Lane, Beoley, REDDITCH, Worcs. B98 9AB</b>
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	Mrs Hilda Goodwin, Room 71, Fornham House, Fornham St Martin, BURY ST EDMUNDS, Suffolk. IP31 1SR (Hon. Life Member)
<b>Secretary</b>	Mrs Anne Blanco White, 72, South Hill Park, LONDON. NW3 2SN
<b>Membership Secretary &amp; Asst. Treasurer</b>	Mrs Norma Harris, 'Barton' Cedar Road, Hethersett, NORWICH, Norfolk. NR9 3JY
<b>Newsletter Editor &amp; Librarian</b>	Mr Philip E. Allery, 199, Walsall Road, ALDRIDGE, Walsall, West Midlands. WS9 0BE
<b>Seed Distribution Officer</b>	Mrs M. V. Criddle, 5 Storeys Lane, Burgh-le-Marsh, SKEGNESS, Lincs. PE24 5LR
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mr. Philip E. Allery – as above
<b>Honorary Auditor</b>	Mrs L Wilkins, 17 Lancaster Avenue, ALDRIDGE, Walsall, West Midlands. WS9 8RE

**Regional Representatives**

<b>Eastern Area</b>	Mrs Shirley Ryder, Toadshole Cottage, Old Road, FEERING, Colchester, Essex. CO5 9RN
<b>London Area</b>	Mrs. Anne Blanco White - as above
<b>Midlands Area</b>	Mr Philip Allery – as above
<b>Southern Area</b>	Mrs. Olga Wells, 24 Westwood Road, MAIDSTONE, Kent ME15 6BG

(Note: For effective cover and reporting on beardless irises bloom and seasonal activities of members, regional representatives are required urgently for the north-eastern, north-western and south-western areas of England; also for Wales and Scotland. Please volunteer. Ed.)

**Specialist Help**

<b>Japanese Iris Specialist</b>	Mrs Anne Blanco White – as above
<b>Laevigata Specialist</b>	Mr. Norman Bennett, 'Rose Farm' 19 Putton Lane, Chickerell, WEYMOUTH, Dorset DT3 4AF
<b>Pacificas Specialist</b>	Rev. Fr. Philip Jones, Erdington Abbey, 49 Sutton Road, Erdington, BIRMINGHAM. B23 6QU
<b>Sibirica Specialist</b>	Mrs Jennifer Hewitt, "Haygarth", Cleeton St Mary, CLEOBURY MORTIMER, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY14 0QU
<b>Spuria Specialist</b>	Volunteer needed urgently please.

**Overseas Contacts**

<b>New Zealand</b>	-	Mrs. Gwenda Harris, Editor, <i>Spectrum</i> , (Journal of the Species Section, New Zealand Iris Society), Rural Delivery 12 O, Oamaru, North Otago, New Zealand.
<b>U.S.A.</b>		
<b>Japanese</b>	-	Mrs. John W. (Evelyn) White, Editor, <i>'The Review' of The Society for Japanese Irises</i> , 193 Jackson Hill Road, Minot, ME 04258 - 4413, U.S.A.
<b>Pacificas</b>	-	Mr. Steve Taniguchi, Editor, <i>Almanac, Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris</i> , 3306 Forbes Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95051, U.S.A.
<b>Sibiricas</b>	-	Mrs Judith M. Hollingworth, Editor, <i>'The Siberian Iris'</i> , 124 Sherwood Road East, Williamston, MI 48895, USA
<b>Spurias</b>	-	Carole Speiss, Editor, <i>Spuria Iris Society's Newsletter</i> , 6204 N 15 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85015, USA

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Group for Beardless Irises is a section of the British Iris Society. Membership of the Society is not a pre-requisite for membership of this Group, but it is fully recommended. The Society's Year Book, published annually, is an additional source of material on the cultivation of beardless irises, and contains articles by eminent irisarians on a wealth of interesting subjects. Membership application forms are available from Mr. Clive Russell whose address is printed in the Group's Membership list at the end of this newsletter.

The Group's objectives are to foster communication between members in Great Britain, Europe and overseas by the exchange of ideas, seeds and plants; to help newcomers with their interests and problems; and to report on new work in hybridisation. The recruitment of younger members is vitally important. A membership application form is enclosed. Recruit a friend to share your love of beardless irises; and/or sponsor a young person who shows interest in irises.

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## EDITORIAL DEADLINES & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Group editorial deadlines are 1<sup>st</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> October. Back issues are available at a cost, inclusive of postage, of £1.50 each (U.K. & Europe) or £2.00 for overseas members. Requests for back copies of newsletters, with payment, to Editor please. Articles for publication are needed urgently. **Without your participation the Group will founder.** Prints or slides of photographs of beardless irises would be welcomed, with permission to include them with articles in future newsletters.

The Group has an extensive library of books and newsletters, with current catalogues from several American Iris Nurseries, which is available to members in the U.K. and Europe on payment of postage. An up-to-date list is planned for inclusion in the next newsletter. Copies will be available from the Editor in July. S.a.e. with requests please.

**Membership subscription rates** for the year 2000 are £3.00 (U.K. & Europe) or £3.50 for other overseas members. Payments to Membership Secretary. Adjustments will be made if newsletter publication falls below two annually. This applies to 1999.

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

After the horrendous storms at the end of 1999 I must extend our sympathy to all gardeners in France. Due to the millennium celebrations and fireworks I feel that too little has been registered in Britain of the dreadful damage that occurred over the Channel. Our storms in the late 1980's were but the proverbial tea-party in comparison. The pessimist in me says "Top up your insurance on House and Property" At the same time the cynic in me says "sell any share-holdings which hold an element of insurance in their composition." I have no investment knowledge and should not be saying this but please be prudent at the very least. These storms were less than 100 miles away. It can all too easily happen here in Britain. Our unusual weather patterns should be a permanent reminder of this risk. The almost complete absence of a truly frost and snow-bound winter and the emergence and flowering of plants at least a month out of season is proof enough for me at least that the climate is undergoing a monumental upheaval.

I am especially concerned as many of you will know I have this last autumn been occupied in receiving and distributing the Irises from the rest of the world, sent for display in conjunction with the B.I.S. 2002 Iris Convention. Among the many plants sent by our generous overseas donors were 14 Historic Irises from the Marc Simonet collection of irises grown in the Parc Floral in Paris. Some are 99/100 years old. These were sent with the kind intervention and help of Laurence Ransom, a B.I.S. and Group member, living in France. I can only hope that these Botanical Gardens did not suffer too much. But the loss of trees as shown on T.V. was heartbreaking.

I know you will share with me my pleasure at being able to approve the conferring of Hon. Life Membership of the Group on our Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Hilda Goodwin, whose lively interest and generous support over many years is now recognised. We wish her well and express our thanks.

This brings me to the vexed problem of officers. We have been unable to fill the post of Editor vacated by Sue Pierce. Although Philip Allery has offered to take over these duties, his age; uncertain health and other commitments can only allow us to regard this as a temporary measure. That Philip has been able to take over this work at all is due in no small measure to the timely offer of Mrs. Norma Harris to take over Philip's work as Membership Secretary and, in due course, that of Treasurer, which we appreciate. In addition to several regional representatives we also require a *Spuria* "specialist" to fill the vacancy caused by the unavoidable resignation of Adrian Whittaker to whom we send our good wishes in his adversity. This post requires not so much a "specialist" as a co-ordinator and liaison officer with a little basic knowledge who would be prepared to find answers to questions raised by members and report on them. Please consider how best you can help to ensure the Group flourishes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

If you have not yet received or responded to an invitation to write to Philip telling him about your iris garden please do so. We are all interested. The Group has an international membership and in the absence of an opportunity to meet on a regular basis, information about members is of considerable interest to others. I am particularly interested in the use of irises in mixed plantings of herbaceous borders and would like to hear your views.

The colourful displays of *I. ensata* and of *I. sibirica* hybrids at the R.H.S. trial grounds at Wisley over the past few years have attracted many visitors, and in several respects there are reasons for optimism. Our finances are sound; public interest in irises is growing; and the past year has seen a record number of new members joining the Group. We welcome them. With good wishes for a successful season. G.R.A. Bomford.

(Note: The eminent "irisarian" Ray Schreiner of Oregon has given me permission to reproduce an article he wrote recently for the American Iris Society's Bulletin on companion planting. His comments and suggestions will be incorporated with your responses in an article planned for the next newsletter. – Ed.)

### SECRETARIAL SECTION.

This has been quite a year for the Group with a number of changes. Norma Harris is established in membership; Philip has taken on the Newsletter as well as coping with the accounts; Fr. Philip Jones is giving the Pacificas a long, hard look and Olga Wells is working on the southern part of the country. We still, I think, need a new *Spuria* specialist. You don't actually need to know an awful lot about *spurias* as such – least of all the species which are something of a no-man's land – because there is an immense amount of written material which can help and most queries will be a matter of plain gardening. There are several of us in the Group who could give some help in an emergency.

But the outstanding item here is that we have decided to make Hilda Goodwin an Honorary Member. Her efforts on behalf of the Group date back to its original foundation by Alex Back to whom she gave unfailing support. After Alex's death, she continued to help Joan Trevithick especially at the London end. Sadly, she has now had to give up her own garden because of poor health, but still likes to keep in touch and always looks forward to the next newsletter. And she keeps a beady eye on the gardens of her present residence.

On the actual plants side, there have been two interesting developments. Firstly, Monique Dumas-Quesnel of Canada sent a number of wide-cross plants to Wisley for assessment. Well, Wisley is unable now to accept plants any more before they have been selected by the JIC so the plants were passed to that committee for distribution in the hope that we could grow them on and bring them forward. There were quite a number of cultivars which were distributed between Jennifer Hewitt, Cy Bartlett, Sid Linnegar and myself. And no, you won't be able to get hold of any for some time, but if you are visiting those gardens you may like to keep an eye open for them though I doubt there will be any flowers before 2001.

The second excitement was some notes and photographs from Dr. Shimizu of Japan who has been working with *Pseudatas* (that's another name for your definitions list). You may remember that Dr. Jack Ellis produced a splendid hybrid between *I. pseudacorus* and *I. ensata* many years ago. This is still around and back in the *Ensata* Trials again. But Dr. Shimizu has produced a number of strong growing plants with a colour range which includes the *pseudacorus* shades as well as white and blue. I certainly look forward to seeing these as well.

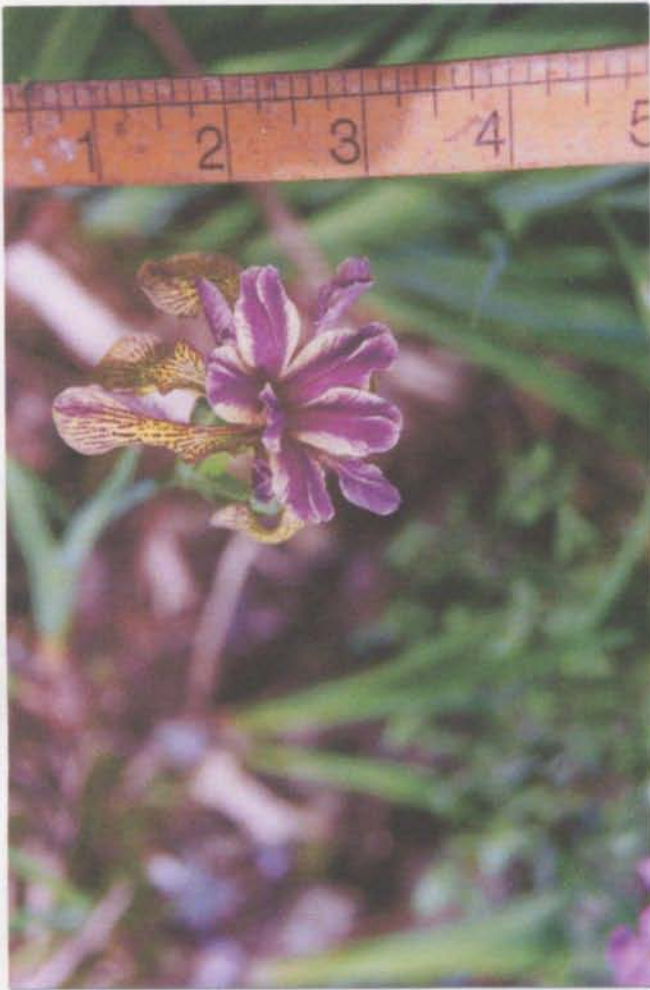
Anne Blanco White

### EDITORIAL

My formal education had a negligible element of botany and further education was deferred, being replaced by six years naval service in circumstances over which I had no control whatsoever. My subsequent post-war studies and career in Local Government involving many evening meetings, gave me little enough time to enjoy family life let alone leisure pursuits. Despite this I have had a long love affair with irises since 1975 when I joined B.I.S. Interest in *I. ensata* has been encouraged by the late Dr. Shuichi Hirao in 1983 and by my dear friend and mentor Dr. Currier McEwen from 1987 onwards. Prior to retirement in 1982 my work included the introduction of word-processing associated with in-house printing for the Chief Executive and Town



Clerk's Department of a large Metropolitan Borough Council, so I have not taken on the work of Editor completely "cold". However modern technology has elevated newsletter production to a fine art, with the ability to import colour photographs from many sources. What a challenge! With support I hope to produce a colourful newsletter full of interest and informative topics. I must emphasise that it is up to you to generate at least 50% of the articles. Extracts or reprints from other journals, unless used as a point of reference, are not a wholly satisfactory solution to shortage of "copy". Here is an example of what I want!



**What plant is this? This is the question raised by Mr. M. J. Maule - See editorial.**

The question and the photographs come from Mr. Martin J. Maule, who until recently lived at Arthog, Dolgellau. He has recently moved to be nearer his family in the south-west. Martin has been very ill and is currently recovering from major surgery. The plant illustrated, growing in his former garden at Arthog, was raised from B.I.S. seed; possibly *I. chrysographes* or a member of the sino-siberian family. I have consulted both Anne Blanco White and Jennifer Hewitt, and their views, with yours, will be printed in the next newsletter.

I am sorry it has taken me so long to put this edition together. I had planned several pages of colour printing but because problems of copyright have yet to be resolved, these have been deferred. Costing colour printing is causing problems also. Acting as your Editor has made me realise just how much we, as a Group, owe our sincere thanks to Sue Pierce and the late Joan Trevithick for their sterling efforts over past years. Looking through the files Sue handed over I have been impressed with the wealth of friendly correspondence she conducted.

That this newsletter has been produced at all is due in no small measure to initial encouragement from our Honorary Secretary, Anne, who not only originated much of the text but acted as a liaison officer for other articles that appear here. My thanks are due also in no small measure to Norma Harris who has taken over duties as Membership Secretary and Assistant Treasurer, and to our Chairman and a personal friend, Raymond Bomford, for his continued support and friendship during difficult times.



I do not know how long I shall be able to continue in this post. Age and ill-health continue to pose problems and it would be in the interests of the Group to have a replacement, if only to ensure the regular publication of the newsletter. Why not consider becoming an Assistant Editor and helping with the next newsletter if the thought of taking over without lead-in time and support worries you. Do remember it is the members' Group, and its success depends on the input from you all. Philip Allery

## FINANCE

The Group's finances are in a healthy state. We have a balance of nearly £1000, with outstanding expenses, including the cost of this newsletter, estimated at £400. I hope to recommend that annual subscriptions, based on two newsletters annually, should increase by £1.00 only for the year 2001 to take into account increases in printing, postage and stationery costs. It depends how much you are prepared to pay for the enhancement of the newsletter by the inclusion of colour. I think it would be a worthwhile addition, but there, I'm biased and would like to have your views before the next newsletter is published. Comments please!

The financial situation is slightly confused by delays in the publication of newsletters over the past two years. This in effect creates the equivalent of a full year's credit to be added to any existing advance payments of subscriptions credited to members. This exercise has been started and individual notifications will be sent to all members with the Autumn newsletter. This will not be published until December to allow time for articles from our Chairman on his trip to the New Zealand Iris Convention.

There has been a welcome influx of new members and many generous donations, including a substantial sum from plant sales. Our thanks are due to many members for their continuing support. The sale of plants donated by Dr. Currier McEwen following the lifting of his *Ensatas* from the Trials bed at Wisley has already raised more than £50. Individual acknowledgments are planned for the next newsletter, and receipts will be included with the audit statement. Philip Allery

## MEMBERSHIP

### Introducing our new Membership Secretary

As your new Membership Secretary, Philip has asked me to write a few lines to introduce myself. I have enjoyed being involved in the group and reading the interesting correspondence from new members. However I must say I have not found my duties overtaking – hopefully after this newsletter goes out I will be inundated with subscriptions!! I must stress that I am not a great iris expert, so if anyone else would like to be more involved with the running of the Group – don't let that put you off – any extra help will be most welcome.

I have recently moved, following divorce, and am on a very steep learning curve with my new garden. All my gardening experience was gained on very free draining sandy soil. My new garden has a much heavier clay soil and after a lot of digging I know that 'heavy' describes it well. My last garden had a very large pond, where I waged a constant battle against reeds, bulrushes, *Iris pseudacorus* plus numerous other pond weeds. Everything round the pond grew in abundance, however away from the damp areas the soil did not retain nutrients well and irises in general did not thrive without a lot of attention. My new garden has a larger, probably natural pond that is completely devoid of any signs of life – possible due to the 50 or so ducks which live on it! I am going to try putting in a few tubs of my less precious plants and hopefully expand from there. The surrounds are a mass of brambles, nettles and ivy – so I have a lot of work to do. I am hopeful that when I finally clear some space the soil will suit the irises better. I have brought hundreds of pots with me. I am an enthusiastic grower of BIS and GBI seed and have many seedling PCT's, which seem to germinate very readily; several interesting *Iris sibiricas* and a large 'miscellaneous' collection, which I will be relieved to finally get into the ground to hopefully reach their full potential. I grew *Iris laevigata* 'Variegata', 'Elegante', 'Snowdrift' and 'Colchesteriensis' in tubs in a smaller pond in the last house. I liked all of these plants – but are there any others that are significantly different? names do not give much away! That is particularly true of *Iris ensatas*. I love these showy plants although I struggled to grow them even in a plastic lined bed with ericaceous compost and mir-acid fertiliser. I will persevere here and hopefully eventually succeed. I certainly enjoy reading the accounts of members' experiences growing the beardless iris all round the world. I feel I am gleaning much useful information and hopefully will be able to do my bit to promote this lovely group of plants. Norma Harris

### Introducing New Members

Since the publication of the last newsletter we have welcomed to membership -

Mrs. Jean Brown of 35 Bailey Road, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3QR. Jean is Manager of the R.H.S. Bookshop at Wisley and she has promised an article on her horticultural interests.

Mr. Paul Burford of 28 Cranbourne Avenue, Hitchin, Herts.

Mrs. B. Carson of "Thornbank", Douglas Terrace, Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire.

Nic Cass of Rishangles, Suffolk has very broad horticultural interests. Of a garden of 3 ½ acres in total, 2 acres have been planted since moving there in 1989, as a wild-life garden. This is an on-going project of significant interest. Other interests are his immediate garden, also created since 1989, mainly of island beds with a wide variety of plants. There is a natural water-feature in the front garden, which also attracts wildlife.

With two greenhouses and a polytunnel, all quite full; coloured foliage plants are of great interest. This member's main interest for many years has been species and hybrids of the Geraniaceae group; attracting garden visits, and about which he has given talks to horticultural societies, etc. in East Anglia. We are promised an article on Nic's long interest in irises.

Mr. Derek Cole of "Moonacre", Lydacott, Fremington, Barnstaple, N. Devon.

Kim and Maggie Davis of Lingen Nursery and Garden, Lingen, Nr. Bucknell, Shropshire SY7 0DY in their 21<sup>st</sup> year of business house the core of the dispersed collection of iris sibirica forms held by the Shropshire Group of the N.C.C.P.G. Their Nursery also holds a fine collection of Alpine, Rock Garden and Herbaceous Plants. Of particular note is the growing collection of Show Auriculas. I am looking forward to my second visit in June next, arranged by the West & Midlands Iris Group.

Mr. A.G. Dickerson of 9 Westonbirt Close, Worcester.

Mr. James G. Horsburgh of 67 Frederick Crescent, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay

Howard Kent of 'Cropstone', St. Minver, Wadebridge, Cornwall has always been interested in growing both flowers and vegetables. On leaving school he joined his parents in their small-holding and market garden at 'Cropstone', situated on the north Cornish coast about one mile inland and subject to the prevailing north and north-westerly winds. The shallow, alkaline soil, overlying slate, holds very little moisture, and with salt-laden air imposes restrictions on what can be grown, despite the advantage of mild winter temperatures and freedom from severe frosts. Sibiricas and spurias grew well here last year. Photographs sent by Howard show attractive mixed plantings in his herbaceous borders. Such photographs are always welcome and will be used where possible to illustrate articles.

Howard developed an interest in irises in his youth, joining the B.I.S. and obtaining both bearded and beardless irises. Other interests and responsibilities then came along marriage, children and thirty years membership of the Royal Observer Corps. Now semi-retired, Howard's interest in irises has been re-kindled, having grown and taken an interest in Species for many years.

Mrs. J. McGrady, Woodside House, Bank Top, Ryton, Tyne & Wear.

Ms. Marlene Scott, Llwynglas, Llwynteg, Ffynnon-Ddrain, Carmarthen.

Mr. B.C. Street, 10, St. Margaret's Grove, Great Kingshill, High Wycombe, Bucks.

Miss S.A. Waldock, 39 Scription Gill, Austfield Lane, Monk Fryston, Leeds, W. Yorks.

Alun & Jill Whitehead moved to Aulden Farm three years ago to establish a small hardy herbaceous nursery after both coming to natural career breaks. It was an almost blank canvas and the house had been badly neglected. It will still be a few years before they can get close to a feeling of maturity in their garden, but the house and outbuildings are getting into better shape. On the nursery side, they decided to sell plants straight away, wherever they could to gain in experience, and naturally they had to rely on mainly seed raised stock. Their sales have gradually built up and the feedback they have gained has been invaluable. Alun & Jill are now in the happy position of increasing the planted areas, and accordingly increasing the number of stock plants. In particular, during the last year, they have started collecting some cultivars of *Hemerocallis* and *Iris ensata*. The bearded irises have never quite attracted them as much as *I. Chrysographes*, *Sibirica*, *Pseudacorus*. Over the last two years they have grown *I. ensata* 'Gracieuse', 'Eden's Charm' and 'Variegata' which they have enjoyed, and because there already exists a national collection of *Sibirica* locally in their area, they decided that *Ensatas* were an area worth exploring. They have a heavy clay soil and the *Gracieuse* has not flagged even in dry spells. Also, whilst the clay is neutral, it becomes acidic (ph 6.5) on the addition of compost, and so they are hopeful that the *ensatas* will be happy in their borders. At the moment they are really at the trial stage and looking to grow as wide a range of *Ensatas* as possible. Alun & Jill visited me as this newsletter went to press and I

have recommended aiming for a pH. of between 5.8 and 6.2; a sunny location having at least six hours' sun daily in the growing season; at least 2" water weekly, rain-water preferably; and heavy feeding. I have similar ground conditions. – Ed)

### **Overseas membership – new member**

**Helmut von Kotzebue** of Martensreihe 24, D-27616 Hollen, Germany.

I have yet to write to several new members, although others have done so; but I'll get round to it as soon as the newsletter is posted. Those members who have not done so previously are invited to send in their personal introductions. In some cases new members are reluctant to do so because of their inexperience. We are here to help but please keep us informed of your progress, successes and problems. You can contact me by telephone or fax at 01922 459397; send me an article on floppy disk or C.D. in Word 97 or Microsoft Works using r.t.f.; or e-mail at <Philip.E.Allery@btinternet.com> Do take part: it can be fun! Ed.

**Membership statistics** - At 1<sup>st</sup> May we had a membership of 110, of whom 71 resided in the U.K.; 9 in Europe and the remaining 30 overseas, as shown in the Appendix. It is a matter of regret that Mrs. J.L. Dixon has been forced by ill-health to resign from membership of the Group and that Mrs. Josephine M. Dean, a personal friend, has passed away in tragic circumstances. I have conveyed the Group's condolences to members of her family.

### **REGIONAL REPORTS** -1999

#### **London Review**

Like everywhere else this has been the year of the slugs, particularly the giant slugs. And there is an oddity, I put a lot of beer dregs out as slug killer and like true alcoholics they mop it up so there is usually a displeasing collection of corpses to clear up. (Either I drop them straight on the bed or on the compost heap as they're all good fertiliser.). But this year the beer containers were not merely empty of corpses, they were licked clean and to judge by appearances it was the giant slugs that did it. They are known to be carnivorous, but having run out of such edibles, they turn to vegetarianism and can consume more plant in less time than their smaller relatives. The only way to catch them seems to be a large, deep bowl of dregs. I shall experiment further. But in this connection, it has always seemed to me that the slugs home in instantly on a plant which is new to the garden. It must smell quite different from the others and I have found that it pays to put a new plant, in a pot, to stand in the garden for some months before planting it out. During that time it is heavily protected from slugs and less so immediately after planting. And, by the way, for those irises which are not seriously allergic to lime, crushed eggshells scattered on the soil surface are quite a good deterrent. I dry them off in the bottom of the oven and then put them through an old coffee grinder – no, it doesn't have to be an old grinder because any powder can easily be wiped out.

Mercifully, the very heavy winter and spring rains, which helped the slugs, also helped the plants later in the year when the drought struck, as their roots could follow the water down into the ground. Certainly the spurias benefited from it. All the same, the seed sets were very poor with pods proving to be empty or filled with dud seeds. I'm having a blitz on this neglected garden so there weren't as many flowers to show for anything as should be expected. The sibiricas did their best and the Picos de Europa form of *I. foetidissima* flowered and set seed. This is distinctive in that the flowers are a pure, plain yellow without any of the veining we expect in the other colour forms. And having tired of bringing the Evansias indoors every autumn, I decided to leave them outside over the last few years. It has worked quite well and now I'm starting to put them in flower beds. So far, so good. And one thing it has thrown some light on is the alleged dwarf form of *I. confusa* – it isn't. Let loose in the garden it takes off and is as big as usual. There is some indication that these plants will modify their size if they are grown indefinitely in pots.

Anne Blanco White

#### **Midlands Review**

1999 was an outstanding year for the West & Midlands Iris Group which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The B.I.S. held its Late Spring Show to coincide with the Malvern Spring Gardening Show, in a marquee at Malvern where beardless irises were well represented. The location of the marquee, well away from the Exhibition Halls, and muddy ground conditions discouraged many of the public. The Group itself manned a stand in one of the Exhibition Halls and created much interest. Group activities continued until mid-October with an Anniversary Lunch and Meeting at The Feathers Hotel, Ludlow, at which Jennifer Hewitt and Cy Bartlett gave illustrated talks on 'Irises Home and Abroad'. Interspersed with visits to the gardens of members this gave a full programme with many opportunities for members to meet.

Ed.



### Southern area review

Mrs. Olga Wells has kindly offered to cover the Southern area and submit reports from time to time. She has already sent me a description of her garden and this will be up-dated to include a report on her successes in the present season, and published with her regional report in the next newsletter. Ed.

### Ensata report.

Inevitably this is concentrated on Wisley and the trials which were immensely successful with a splendid display of bloom to attract visitors. There was a certain amount of difficulty with misnamed plants, which was mostly sorted out. Details of awards will be found in the BIS Year Book, but there was a good selection of Awards of Merit – which is a show bench award for a good spike with nice branching and handsome flowers.

A good selection of new plants have been Referred for Assessment and should have been planted in the trial bed by now while a number of plants, probably about to receive the Award of Garden Merit, will be planted around the grounds at Wisley. With luck they will be correctly named. There was a sad affair when two varieties were supposed to be planted in neighbouring beds around a fountain. There were some of the correct varieties, but they were both mixed up together and generously interplanted with other unintended varieties. The final result was not satisfactory from any point of view.

Ensatas seem to be popular at present and several nurseries are either extending their stock or including these plants in their catalogues as new fields. Let us hope they continue to be popular.

There was one interesting point deriving from the original planting of this trial. The usual advice is to plant, or replant, in autumn and preferably while the soil is still warm. And this practice is normally followed at Wisley. However, for reasons beyond their control, a number of plants were only installed in the trial bed in the new year. It was quite remarkable how they failed to catch up with the earlier planting. It would be expected that during the second autumn they would make up the difference, but they never did. Possibly, the earlier plants simply got their roots into the unoccupied ground during the winter, and kept them there for the next two years, but the moral does seem to be that if you can't plant in the first autumn, then it may be best to lift and plant again in refreshed ground in the second autumn. Anne Blanco White

Note: Dr. Currier McEwen has very generously donated some of his plants dug from the Wisley Trial Grounds to raise funds for the Group. I have grown them on and all are flourishing. Those interested should write to me in July next (s.a.e. please) by which time I shall be in a position to evaluate and list plants ready for sale in September next and make a positive identification in cases where there is any uncertainty. I have already raised over £50 for Group funds from these sales. – Ed.

### FLYING SEEDS – Hiroshi Shimizu

I have been interested in hybridising Japanese irises and observing wild iris species for about 20 years. I have long wondered why *Iris ensata* produces flat semi-circular seeds. This summer I believe I have found the answer during a trip to Hokkaido.

In mid-July, I drove a rental car from Sapporo airport to Wakkanai, which is the most northern town in all of Japan. The main road from Sapporo to Wakkanai runs north along the Sea of Japan. When I entered the town of Tomamae, located about 44° N latitude, I found 20 large propellers used to generate electricity for commercial purposes. These propellers are on towers on the eastern terrace along the road. The diameter of the propellers is 54 metres and the towers height is 45 metres.

Many wild *Iris ensata* plants grow on the terrace around the towers. There were also many clumps of *Iris ensata* on both sides of the road at some distance from the terrace. I stopped my car when I spotted a colour mutant among these wild irises at the side of the road. The mutant has a greyish pink flower and I collected it and took it back to my car with much pleasure. When I looked back at the irises growing along the road I had a sudden inspiration. These plants along the road must be seedlings of the plants growing higher on the terrace. When the seed capsules opened on the plants up on the terrace strong winds must have carried the seeds to the lower areas along the road.

The original habitat of the irises is on the terrace high up on the East side of the road. The place where I collected the mutant iris is surrounded by two very long banks. Iris seeds could not be carried to this place by flowing water. The irises at the lower



locations must have originated from flying seed. The propeller towers and banks along the road are artificial configurations. This causes me to believe that both areas are relatively new habitats of *Iris ensata*.

I wanted to confirm that my idea of flying seeds was plausible so at home this past September I tested three different types of seeds: *Iris ensata*, *Iris laevigata* and *Iris sanguinea*. First, I put seeds of wild *Iris ensata* and wild *Iris laevigata* in a steel basket. Second, I put the basket on top of an electric fan. When I switched on the fan only a portion of the *Iris ensata* flew to the top of the basket. Third, I changed the switch from low to high. When I changed the wind to high both *Iris ensata* and *Iris laevigata* seed 'flew'. It was difficult to control the wind from the fan and I could not separate the *Iris ensata* seeds from the *Iris laevigata* seed by the artificial wind.

The same experiment using *Iris ensata* and *Iris sanguinea* seeds showed the same result. Although the experimental conditions were not ideal, I believe the results confirm that *Iris ensata* seeds are more readily carried by the wind than the seeds of *Iris laevigata* or *Iris sanguinea*. Maybe *Iris ensata* seeds are carried to far locations not only by water, but also by wind.

It is said that wild *Iris ensata* grows in damp areas beside lakes and rivers. Although this is correct, wild *Iris ensata* grows in damp areas beside the sea in northern Honshu and Hokkaido along with wild plants of the genus *Hemerocallis*. Wild *Iris ensata* and *Hemerocallis* species are resistant to salt breezes and produce greater numbers of plants than those that are found beside lakes and rivers. These plants are graze-resistant also. Horses never graze on them. And horse dung becomes good plant food for them.

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF PSEUDATA – Hiroshi Shimizu**

I decided to start interspecies hybridising using *I. pseudacorus* and *Iris ensata* in 1993. During the first stage from 1993 to 1995, I collected many strains of *I. pseudacorus* grown from seed obtained from seed exchanges of the British Iris Society and the Species Iris Group of North America (SIGNA). In the second stage, 1996 to 1998, I mixed pollen from several Japanese iris cultivars and put it on about 100 stigmas of the various *I. pseudacorus* clones. The results of these crosses prompted me to select a special *Iris pseudacorus* clone which I named 'Gubijin'. 'Gubijin' is a very fertile pod parent and excellent at setting seed.

About half the F<sub>1</sub> hybrid seedlings bloomed within one year after they germinated in pots in the spring. Although the leaves of these seedlings had a slight yellow tinge the plants demonstrated hybrid vigour and rapidly increased in size and number.

I noted two significant features of the seedlings from 'Gubijin'. First some of the F<sub>1</sub> seeds from 'Gubijin' germinated in their pods in autumn. Second, some of the 'Gubijin' seedlings from pollen taken from a white *Iris ensata* produced white flowers with a yellow signal. This led me to conclude that 'Gubijin' possesses a gene for white colour in heterozygous condition.

In the third stage of my interspecies hybridization programme (1999), I made selective crosses using selected specific Japanese iris cultivars with flowers of various colours and colour patterns. I obtained about 500 hybrid seeds when I harvested them in September. About 20 of the seeds had already germinated in the pod. These seedlings may make a new wave in the iris world.

Note. When asking Mr Shimizu's permission to reproduce this material, I also asked about chromosome counts. He replied that "the interspecific hybrids are diploids, but the pod parent 'Gubijin' is aneuploid:  $2n = 35$ . Two other Japanese hybridisers have raised plants with 46 chromosomes. F<sub>1</sub> Japanese iris hybrids may be either diploid or tetraploid." Anne Blanco White

### **PACIFIC COAST IRISES - Philip Jones**

In 1977 there were three things that attracted me to Pacific Coast Irises. The first was a photograph of mixed hybrids in the Thompson and Morgan seed catalogue. Secondly some sensible person on an iris stand at one of the RHS shows in St Vincent Square sold me Victor Cohen's guide to the said irises and the author claimed that I did not need a greenhouse to germinate the seeds. All that was required was to leave the seed boxes outside during the winter. If it snowed you were allowed and even encouraged to roll snow balls on top of them. This I felt I could manage. Thirdly the key to success was to transplant in September. Any other time was fatal - though nowadays just after flowering is reckoned to be safe as well.

I bought my seed from Orpington and it all germinated for me. For a few weeks I felt I might be becoming an important horticultural person but then, not for the last time, I was moved to another religious community. I sent my iris seedlings to our community in Chawton where we have a large garden and a professional gardener. Nowadays a few of these irises still survive even though we have tried to dig them out. This is useful because we can compare these plants with the kind of irises we can grow from seed today courtesy of the British Iris Seed lists.

Ten years ago, just after I arrived in Birmingham, I enquired about seed from the BIS. The secretary sent me a bagful to be going on with. I ordered more from the seed lists in the spring and I ended up with far more plants than I could manage for what is a small garden. However, there had been interesting developments. The colour range was greater with rather strong brownish orange shades, some of which I did not care for. There were a number of small plants, almost rockery size, which had pale mottled flowers. All these flowers grew well - far too well. They took over the whole garden and I decided to remove ones I did not like. I also divided them drastically after flowering. This was probably a mistake. It has taken a long time for the remnant to re-establish themselves. However, much of what was over I have sent down to Chawton, and our gardener Eddie Croucher, has started to select colour strains for crossing. The irises probably grow well for me because the soil is not too alkaline and the flower beds are raised - I try to grow lilies as well - and receive a heavy mulch in spring of compost made from stable straw.

In the last couple of years some irises grown from the seed lists seem to show a different direction in breeding. Some of the flowers are smaller than usual even though the plant is medium height. Perhaps there is no intention at all, but if this is the case I consider myself fortunate because the flowers balance the leaves are narrow tending towards grassy and bright green. It will be interesting to see if the second year is as good as the first.

### Reports from America.

The spring 1999 *Almanac of the Society for the Pacific Coast Native Iris* (SPCNI), whose permission to reprint the article is acknowledged, contains a fascinating article from 1954. It is from a late summer issue of the Bulletin of the Southern California Iris Society. The article is by Dr. Roswell Johnson and is entitled Goals in Pacific Coast Breeding. He lists ten.

I summarise them as follows:

1. Aim for a less veined blue, closer to *Hoogiana* blue. He suggests *munzii* might be helpful.
2. Likewise red. Red is available but not combined, he says, with all the good habits.
3. The same with pink. The pinks have too much lavender, but as we have a good red progress should not be too difficult.
4. The purples are too narrow and too much veined.
5. In general the veining should be reduced, but we still want some to be heavily veined like *bracteata* or *Oyez*.
6. Shows need to include a class called "patterned" which would include all non-selfs. We need blends, bitones, bi-colours and that "fore-and-aft" pattern that is usually only ever applied to *douglasiana*.
7. Length of season. One of his plants was noted as a green pod on 22nd February and was still in flower the 31st May when he went on holiday. He suggests *I.thompsonii* might help because it is later than the others.
8. Larger size. Look to *munzii* for help here.
9. Better resistance to "reds" in foliage. Red coloration, starting at the tip of the leaf is normal in a slight degree, he says, but it becomes deadly in some individuals. He suggests that red follows upon any cause of weakness.
10. Better ability to stand transplanting. Use *douglasiana* as this grows naturally as far south as Santa Barbara County.

Adele Lawyer comments upon these.

1. Good blues have emerged. She lists Sierra Dell, Jean Erickson, Pacific Rim, Pacific High and Sierra Azul.
2. Reds that pass the mark are Latin Blood, Escalona, Hot Blooded and Common Sense.
3. Clear pink has not yet arrived. But recommended are Banbury Princess, Pink Cupid, the wine pink Commitment and peach pink Baby Blanket.
4. Purples have definitely arrived. Ghio's Age of Chivalry, Deep Blue Sea, Miramar, National Anthem, and Deep Magic.
5. Veining has been used with dark patterns on the falls, contrasting with the standards and style arms, as in Foothill Banner, Boom Town and High Splendor.
6. Judging is no longer limited to selfs. Branched plants, plicatas, fancy signals, spots, veins, and blends of colours are now exhibited.
7. *I munzii* and selections of late *I. douglasiana* have extended the flowering season. *Munzii* contributes the late starting bloom date and *douglasiana* introduces a branching habit. Flowering is from the end of April to late June. The flowers, however, tend to be large and open. More work needs to be done here. Also to create plants that begin flowering earlier.
8. Larger flowers that are in proportion to taller stems include High Winds, Sea Gal, Sierra Dell and Dead Ringer.
9. The red colour is not a problem for Adele Lawyer. She says it can be decorative as on the spathes of *I bracteata*.
10. Transplanting remains a problem. Sometimes new introductions lack vigour. A solution is to grow them in pots for a year and protect against disease.

Dr Johnson in 1954 would not have imagined the following: Ruffles in variations from light to tight or pleated. The anemone form is very new; Signal are varied in colour and design and neon violet signal create a striking luminescence; Colour now



In the United Kingdom growing named varieties from North America is not always successful. Imported plants do not seem to survive well. One plant that may well be worth trying is Pacific Rim. It has been singled out for high praise in the United States. It is one of the blue irises mentioned above. It won the prestigious Mitchell Award for 1998. It received 72 votes - the highest ever achieved. It came third in Adele and Lewis Lawyer's table of long flowering irises. It flowered for sixty days. Finally the SPCNI announces it has its own world wide web site. This could be enormously helpful. Reporting the names of many American varieties is at times rather like listening to strangers discussing their second cousins. Photographs will make all the difference. The web site address is <<http://www.pacificcoastiris.org>> - Philip Jones.

(Editorial notes - The co-operation of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Irises and its editorial staff in allowing reference to articles written in their Almanac is acknowledged, with many thanks. Members with internet facilities are strongly recommended to surf the SPCNI web site. I have done so during one of Philip's welcome visits and the display was colourful and very informative. I was uncertain about the "copyright" of publications on a web site so I contacted Stephen C. Ayala, the Society's web-master. Permission was promptly and generously given to down-load and re-print in order to place a copy in the Group's Library. This is now available .

You may remember that in newsletter no 43 in my article on membership (page 3) when introducing Revd. Fr. Philip Jones, I mentioned my experiment of transplanting divisions of Pacific Coast irises at monthly intervals up to six months later than the recommended months of September/October, i.e. when the new white shoots are first emerging. Of twenty plants there is only one loss but it is not a practice I would recommend unless the alternative for one reason or another, i.e. moving house, is the total loss of the plant. Although the potted plants were transplanted successfully this spring, i.e. one year later, they are unhappy and I can best describe them as "sulking"! Anne's comments on the planting of *ensatas* at Wisley seem relevant here, so my firm advice is - "if you can do so keep to the tried and tested autumn division and transplanting routine".)

#### **LARVAE TURN THE HEAT UP: ACCOUNTING FOR SCORCH? - Anne Blanco White**

Scorch has exercised the hearts and minds of iris growers for many decades. It is most often found in tall bearded irises, but is not confined to them. It occurs for certain in *sibiricas* and, I am sure, in *spurias*. I strongly suspect it may appear in other herbaceous perennials as well though in different forms and under different names.

Irises in general, are widely grown around the world and suffer from a variety of local wild life from mega-fauna to microbial invasions. Scorch, however, is very peculiar. Typically there is no warning of the affliction which usually appears in mid-spring when the new growth is well under way and becomes steadily more evident as the plants increase in size. Fans turn brown from the centre outwards and collapse. Sometimes only one offset is affected and sometimes it extends to the whole plant.

Investigations by plant pathologists have failed to find any causative disease: no virus, no fungus, no bacteria specific to that plant which could cause the collapse while leaving neighbouring plants in good health.

Even more curious are two additional oddities. New plants, even of the same cultivar, can be planted immediately on the same site and will grow on satisfactorily while, if the original rhizome itself is still firm, really valuable forms may be replanted with the rhizome below the soil surface and there is a good chance that new offsets will develop although that is a long-term undertaking. This is probably because the new leaf buds along the sides of the rhizomes are protected from the outside environment and can reach a stage of at least one root by drawing on what little nourishment is left in the rhizome. Scorch, as such, is not infectious.

Naturally, the first reaction on seeing a scorched fan is to cut it and its rhizome out of the plant before rot can set in. Careful inspection of the remains usually shows a rotting fan base and perhaps some of the rhizome with the rest apparently healthy. There may also appear to be roots on the rhizome, but close inspection will show that either these are old dry ones or hollow outer skins. These last have often lost a good deal of their length partly at least because they were broken during the lifting.

A couple of years ago I was finally able to replant a fairly large number of neglected *sibiricas*. They were growing on very heavy clay and it pays when transplanting them to wash most of it off the roots before replanting. I found that nearly all the plants had at least two and sometimes more root-eating larvae of the 'chafer' family among the roots. These creatures are very common in Britain; there are several species, but they all have creamy-grey bodies and orange-brown heads. Typically the eggs are laid in late summer below ground level in fairly large numbers. On hatching the grubs tuck into the nearest juicy roots and eat away through the winter. In spring they pupate, change into beetles and it all starts again.

'Chafers' are not confined to Britain where there are other root eating creatures which will produce the same results. In areas where there are no chafers, there will be alternative pests for scorch is an international phenomenon.

As gardeners we fairly regularly replant our flower beds and clear out dead root material so we don't give much thought to the natural processes intended to clean up soil, but dead roots do need to be cleared away and this is generally done by a very large variety of creatures. As a rule these larvae are thinly dispersed in the soil because they have natural predators, but sometimes they can occur in concentrations of quite large numbers. Some of these creatures live in the larval state for several years before pupating. Most, luckily, are annuals, and pupate in late spring so that by the time an afflicted plant is lifted there is no sign of what caused the damage and probably the rest of the plant will be unharmed. But if one of the perennial forms settles in under a plant, which is not due for replanting for another couple of years, the whole of a large plant may be lost.

Most iris do not root sequentially: the second year's roots will be interspersed amongst some of the first year although, as the rhizomes age, the oldest growths have no roots left. Any one root may be effective for two years and the outer skins of the roots become extremely tough and may persist long after the heart has rotted away. Many a gardener has ripped off an old root only to find that a brand new one was growing through it.

So, over winter and through the spring the larvae eat the roots, and they do start with the newest and most tender material which is essential to the new leaves. In spring the leaves begin to grow, but there are no roots to supply those leaves with water and nutrients. They can live on the reserves in the rhizomes for a shorter or longer period. The rhizome alone cannot keep them going through the season and, because the centre leaves of the fan are the last to be able to draw on those reserves, so they are the first to die off from starvation.

The timing of the appearance of scorch probably depends on which larvae are doing the damage, how much was done over winter and how many of them are present. A really cold winter should keep them dormant so that the damage appears late in the season well after the soil has warmed up.

Scorch has not been a major affliction in Britain for quite a long time now and as long as commercial growers are able to sterilise their soils they should be fairly safe from the perennial larvae. The real difficulty is that we mostly replant in early autumn, after the eggs have been laid, and offer nice, freshly turned soil for the larvae to burrow into.

Many years ago, I visited a garden where all the newly bought and planted irises had succumbed to scorch. They had come from a reputable supplier and neither of us could offer an explanation. To my certain knowledge those plants would have been sent out very well cleaned. As they were different varieties it is unlikely that the eggs came into the garden with them or it seems likely that the supplier would have lost much of his stock too. With hindsight, I think that when the bed was prepared eggs were broadcast and in due time the plants were attacked.

That scorch is mostly associated with TBs is due, I think, to their more spaced-out habit of growth which makes it immediately apparent and also their greater popularity in past decades. With the more compact smaller bearded and the sibiricas I suggest that scorch is often not noticed until the fan is dead and the grower assumes that it was overcrowded and rot has set in because of inadequate ventilation. This should be quite easily distinguishable from the effects of botrytis though in warm, humid seasons the dying leaves may be afflicted with this as well.

It should be possible to prove, or disprove, that the cause of scorch is root-eating larvae, but I doubt if anyone is going to carry out the experiment. Clean plants would need to be placed in sterilised soil with appropriate eggs or larvae introduced. There would be no guarantee that the larvae would survive to operate and it might be necessary to repeat the experiment. A major problem could be ensuring that there wasn't further natural infestation of the bed but, theoretically, it should be possible to trap the emerging adults - especially if the trial were under glass. Still, in default of proof positive, I offer this as a possible, even probable explanation. The sad conclusion that has to be drawn is that, if I am right, scorch will continue to occur and since we are actively discouraged from too ruthless a pesticidal regime we shall have to put up with it. Probably the best thing would be to dig up the plant as soon as scorch is noticed and ensure that there are no perennial larvae left among the roots to continue their depredations. Meantime, the appearance of scorch-like symptoms in your plant just may be an indication that the clump is overdue for breaking-up and replanting.

Anne Blanco White



## SIBIRICAS

### Do you want to hybridize Siberian Irises?

This is the heading to an article by Marty Scafer in the Spring 1999 edition of "The Siberian Iris". It is an excellent article and I have obtained permission to reprint it. It will be included in the next newsletter. Ed.

### The Wisley Trials

Jennifer Hewitt's report in the 1999 Year Book of the British Iris Society draws attention to the problems experienced in sending plants for trial. It seems that a number of cultivars performed untypically. Cultivation and site problems were suspected which added to unseasonable weather during the preceding winter and spring. The outstanding performer was 'Berlin Ruffles' (Tomas Tamberg '93 which not only gained the RHS Award of Garden Merit (AGM) in 1995, following an Award of Merit for Exhibition (AM/E) in 1993, but beat all other contenders, including bearded, for the Dykes Medal this year. We are indebted to Jennifer Hewitt and B.I.S. for their permission to quote from this report.

Of special note for more than one reason was the presence in the Trial of 'Perfect Vision' with graceful flowers in shades of blue (Cy Bartlett '96). When stocks are sufficient, plants will be sold to raise funds for the Iris Fund for the Prevention of Blindness. Add this attractive plant to your garden and you will be helping a good cause. The 1999 Iris Year Book containing Jennifer's article can be borrowed from the Group Library—Ed.

## SPURIAS

Anne has drawn attention to the need for a Spuria Specialist. There is no doubt that we are fortunate enough to have among our members those to whom the word specialist rightly applies but if it is proving to be daunting in encouraging volunteers let us change the title. What the Group needs is an enthusiastic liaison officer with an interest in Spurias who will research member's queries and generate articles.

Spurias generally are among the taller of the irises averaging perhaps from 3ft. to 5ft. under good growing conditions. They make good background plants and can be left for several years without separating, resulting in large eye-catching clumps. For those wanting cut flowers they are an ideal choice. They last longer than most other irises and have a wide colour range. The Spuria Iris Society, a division of the American Iris Society, has considered the publication of a booklet, to serve as a starting point for a book. Certainly this is much needed and should be feasible considering the eminence and experience of their Spuria personalities.

I am indebted to the article by Floyd Wickencamp on Spuria Iris culture in the Spuria Iris Society's Summer 1999 Newsletter. They prefer neutral to slightly alkaline soil and demand plenty of sunshine for good bloom. They require good drainage and should not be planted where there is likely to be standing water for extended periods. Spurias are heavy feeders and benefit from applications of liquid fertiliser high in phosphorous. A 15-30-15 water-soluble powder or corresponding commercial mix is recommended.

Our former Spuria specialist Adrian Whittaker encouraged me to grow a few spurias shortly before domestic circumstances forced him to resign from the Group. The results are encouraging and I am preparing a bed for seedlings to be planted out in the autumn. **Our real need now is for seed to enable members to grow more of these rewarding hybrids.**

I am about to check out the new spuria web site at <http://horn.campus.uidaho.edu/spuria> so if space and time allow I'll advise whether I have recovered enough material to make another library item available. There is a reciprocal arrangement in force between editors of the various newsletters so these are added to the library once they have been read and newsletter items extracted. Dave Niswonger's "Answers to Questions from a young Hybridiser" in the Winter 1999 Newsletter is well worth reading and subject to the necessary consents I plan to include extracts in the next newsletter. What is essential for the welfare of the Group is the emergence of young growers and hybridisers. Volunteers please! Help is available. Ed.

**ITEMS WANTED.** - Mr Akira Horinaka has informed Anne that he wants to find *I. setosa* with variegated leaves and *I. setosa* in its dark red-purple form. If any member can help please write direct. Those with e-mail facilities can contact him at "ah-nishi@msa.biglobe.ne.jp"

**SEEDS** -The Chairman has reviewed our seed bank and in the absence of recent donations has decided that it would be unfair to sell old seed, although some may germinate eventually. Most has been sown with the intention of selling any resultant seedlings in aid of Group funds. There is an urgent need for seed from this year's or last year's crops. All members are urged to make a special effort to build up our seed bank once more. Seeds should be sent to Margaret Criddle specifying its G.B.I. source. Ed.

### **IRIS SYMPOSIUM 2000 – NEW ZEALAND**

Gwenda Harris and the New Zealand Iris Society invite all of us to "help the New Zealand Iris Society celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary". The Iris Symposium 2000 will be held at Mount Maunganui, New Zealand from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> November next. There will be some international speakers, garden visits, and post symposium tours.

For an application form, or further information contact **Peter Berry, Apartment 8D, Tower 1, 1 Marine Parade, Mount Maunganui, New Zealand. It's not too late!**

### **APPENDIX - GROUP MEMBERSHIP AT 1<sup>st</sup> May 2000.**

Mr. Philip E. Allery, ( Editor and Librarian, Hon. Treasurer), 199 Walsall Road, ALDRIDGE, Walsall, West Midlands, WS9 0BE. ( Midlands Area representative).

Mr. Peter Ashley, 16 Spencer Road, EASTLEIGH, Hampshire. SO50 9GR.

Mr. Stephen J. Atkins, 70 Fruitlands, MALVERN WELLS, Worcs. WR14 4XA.

Mr. B. and Mrs. A. Baughen, "Copper Beeches", North End Lane, DOWNE, Orpington, Kent BR6 7HG.

Dr. John A. Beal, "Ashleigh", Barnsley Road, SCAWSBY, Doncaster DN5 8QE.

Mr. Norman Bennett, "Rose Farm", 19 Putton Lane, Chickerell, Weymouth, Dorset. DT3 4AF.

Mrs. Anne Blanco White, (Hon. Secretary), 72 South Hill Park, LONDON, NW3 2SN. (London Area and Japanese iris representative.)

Mr. G.R.A. Bomford, (Chairman), "The Hills", Tanhouse Lane, Beoley, REDDITCH, Worcs. B98 9AB.

Mrs Jean Brown. 35 Bailey Road, Westcott, DORKING, Surrey. RH4 3QR

Mrs. Pauline Brown, t.a. V.H. Humphrey, Iris Specialist, Westlees Farm, Logmore Lane, WESCOTT, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3JN.

Mr. Paul Burford. 28 Cranbourne Avenue, HITCHEN, Herts. SG5 2BS

Mrs. Ann Butler, 31 Gorsemoor Road, Heath Hayes, CANNOCK, Staffs. WS12 5HW.

Mrs. B. Carson. "Thornbank", Douglas Terrace, LOCKERBIE, Dumfriesshire. DG11 2DZ.

Mr. John Carter, Proprietor, Rowden Gardens, BRENTOR, Nr. Tavistock, Devon PL19 0NG.

Mr. Derek W. Carver, "Beverstone", 2 Birds Hill Rise, OXSHOTT, Surrey. KT22 0SW.

Mr. N. Cass, "Orchard End", Dublin Road. RISHANGLES, Suffolk. IP23 7QB.

Mr. C. Chesney, "Iona", Woodlands, Warkworth, MORPETH, NE65 0SY.

Mr Derek S. Cole. "Moonacre" Lydacott, Fremington, BARNSTAPLE, North Devon. EX31 3QG

Mrs. P.J. Cole, 27 Woodbury, Lambourn, HUNGERFORD, Berks RG17 7LU.

Mr. J. Collington, 8 Runswick Drive, Wollaton, NOTTINGHAM, NG8 1JD.

Mrs. Margaret V. Criddle, (Hon. Seeds Officer), 5 Storeys Lane, BURGH le MARSH, Skegness, Lincs. PE24 5LR.

Mr. K.W. Davis. Lingen Nursery & Garden, Lingen, NR. BUCKNELL, Shropshire. SY7 0DY

Mr. A.G. Dickerson. 9 Westonbirt Close, Worcester. Wr5 3RX

Miss Clare Dodsworth, 42 Middleham Road, DARLINGTON, Co. Durham. DL1 3DJ.

Mrs. Barbara Draper, "Toads Abode", 2 Whitecross Avenue, SHANKLIN, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, PO37 7EB.

Mrs. S.A. Ecklin, 1, Sole Farm Close, GREAT BOOKHAM, Surrey. KT23 3ED.

Mr. K. N. and Mrs. D. Edmondson, "Hopcroft", Long Bank, BEWDLEY, Worcs. DY12 2QT.

Mr. P. & Mrs. W. Farrell, "Flaville", Hopwas Hill, Lichfield Road, Nr. TAMWORTH, Staffs. B78 3AQ.