

ALMANAC

of the

SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRIS

Newsletter September 1973 Volume I Number 1



Embellish'd with Illustrations
Newly Set into Type & Printed



Almanac of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris

Newsletter September 1973 Volume I Number 1

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Officers of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris

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Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris Information

Membership: American members of the Pacific Coast Native Iris Society must also be members of the American Iris Society.

Dues:	Annual:	Individual	\$4.00	Family	\$5.00
	Triennial:	Individual	\$10.00	Family	\$12.00
	Supporting Annual		\$6.00		
	Life Membership		\$50.00		
	Honorary Life		NO DUES		

Newsletter: Published biannually in March and September. Contributions from any grower of pacific coast native iris are invited. Articles, stories, poems and photographs are suitable and should be sent to the editor. Double-space, typed copy is preferred, but is not required.

Almanac of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This first issue of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris Almanac is for me a dream come true. It's a demonstrable fact societies advocating a certain genus or species of flower, do indeed, contribute to the advancement, diversity and dissemination of their favored flower. To be effective a society must incorporate the diverse opinions of its disparate membership. Only in this way can we logically evaluate and then determine how best to grow and bloom, and then advocate the flowers for which we care so much. So this newsletter is our mouthpiece. As such our newsletter can and should be interesting and informative to all readers. The only way this can be so is for all members to contribute to it.

Perhaps it's inevitable that the birth of a society be accompanied by a few goofs. Like the one in the NOTICE or my having failed to see that publicity be sent to the AIS Bulletin in time. Nothing great, just enough to color the cheeks.

As per the By-laws, a nominating committee has been named. The members are:

Jack McCaskill, Chairman, Pasadena, CA
Barbara Serdynski, Los Angeles, CA
Bill Gunther, Del Mar, CA
August Phillips, Inglewood, CA
Richard Richards, Mt. Baldy, CA

Each of these people know and are known by many Californicae enthusiasts on this long coast. In naming them my aim is that the next set of officers of this society represent the whole pacific coast. The Nomination and Election Committee's slate will be presented in the March issue of the Almanac.

Because the terms of the present officers were, at first, to be very short - a year was tacked on so that the elections would conform to the By-laws; and, because the present officers could be considered a bit provincial, I have refrained from naming all but two committees. The newly elected president and his officers thus will have the opportunity to nominate people from various areas whom they know and can work with for the Standing Committees. The other committee, besides the one described above, is the Display Garden Committee for which Dick Richards has shown much zeal.

One other nomination that has been confirmed was for a life membership. George Stambach has for years been a staunch advocate of Californicae and a society for such. In rousing the interest of Southern Californians to the native cause he has been generous with both seeds and advice. His seeds and seedlings are blooming in many gardens, not all local. Just as his dream for a Native Iris Society is nearing fruition, George lost his wife and was himself gravely ill. George is now in his eighties. We hope his nineties and one hundredth birthday will find him still reading the Almanac.

In short, I believe we have a sound organization and a good publication that will get even better with your help.

Ray Chesnik

BY-LAWS OF THE SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRIS

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRIS.

ARTICLE II: OBJECT

The object of this society shall be to promote interest in the growing and development of pacific coast native iris. The object shall also be to identify varieties and to eliminate duplication in nomenclature; to maintain a complete list of registered varieties and species; to publish information and data; to support research of a scientific and horticultural nature; to encourage the development and maintenance of display gardens for pacific coast native iris.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section 1. Various memberships shall consist of: Individual, Family, Supporting Annual, life, and Honorary. Membership in the American Iris Society is a prerequisite for all United States residents.

Section 2. A scale of dues:

ANNUAL:	INDIVIDUAL	\$4.00	FAMILY	\$5.00
TRIENNIAL:	INDIVIDUAL	\$10.00	FAMILY	\$12.00
SUPPORTING ANNUAL:		\$6.00		
LIFE:		\$50.00		
HONORARY LIFE:		NO DUES		

Section 3. Honorary life memberships may be created by the Executive Committee for those individuals who have made outstanding contributions in furthering the objectives of the society.

ARTICLE IV: ELECTED OFFICERS

Section 1. The elected officers of this society shall be a President, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Secretary-Treasurer and an Editor.

Section 2. Officers shall be elected biennially and shall take office on July 1 of the election year.

Section 3. Duties of Officers:

A. The President shall preside at all meetings of the society and of the Executive Committee, and shall make all appointments and generally perform such duties as pertain to the office. The President shall be ex officio a member of all committees except the Nomination and Election Committee.

B. The First Vice-President, in the absence of the President, shall perform all duties of that office, and shall be the President -Elect. The First Vice-President shall also serve as Program Chairman for the annual meeting.

C. The Second Vice-President, in the absence of the President and First Vice-President, shall perform all the duties of those offices. The Second Vice-President shall also serve as Chairman of the Publicity Committee.

D. The Secretary-Treasurer shall conduct the correspondence of the society except as otherwise provided, keep the roll, record minutes of business meetings, send out notices of meetings, have charge of the funds and be responsible for the collection of dues. He shall make all disbursements authorized by the President or the Executive Committee and shall make an annual report to the Executive Committee and an annual statement to the society by means of publication of that report in the Newsletter.

E. The Editor shall have charge of the publications of the society, which shall include at least one Newsletter a year. Editorship shall begin in the election year with the next due issue.

F. The Immediate Past President shall be the liaison between the past Executive Committee and the newly elected Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The elected officers of the society together with the Immediate Past President shall constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to manage the affairs of the society and to make all decisions including financial, excepting as otherwise provided.

Section 3. Vacancies occurring in the Executive Committee shall be filled by the President with the consent of the Executive Committee.

Section 4. The Executive Committee may designate Honorary Memberships.

Section 5. Decisions shall be made by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 6. Except at the annual meeting the business of the Executive Committee shall be carried on through correspondence.

ARTICLE VI: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. A Nomination and Election Committee of five members, including one member from the Executive Committee who shall be the Chairman of the Committee, shall be appointed by the President no later than September 1 of each year preceeding elections.

Section 2. The Nomination and Election Committee shall present a slate of officers to the membership in the Newsletter in each election year. This slate, unless the members desire to make further nominations, shall be the officers for the ensuing term, without balloting. However, should the members make further nominations not later than February 15, there will be a voting ballot mailed to the membership. To make a further nomination, one must obtain the signatures of five members in good standing as endorsement and mail the nomination to the Chairman of the Nominations and Elections Committee along with a written statement of acceptance by the nominee.

be returned to the Nominations and Elections Chairman not later than May 15.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

Section 1. There shall be one regular meeting of the society per year to be held at a site designated by the Executive Committee, for the discussion of business and to receive the reports of the Standing Committees. Sites designated for the annual meeting should be in a different area each year.

Section 2. Informal meetings may be held each year at bloom time in the Display Gardens.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the President, or upon request of one third of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. There shall be the following Standing Committees: Display Garden, Library, Publications, Membership, Publicity, and Ways and Means.

Section 2. The Display Garden Committee will include all the Chairmen of the various Display Gardens. They are responsible for the plantings and maintenance of the Gardens, cultivars, species, and guests in the plantings. Chairmanship of this Committee shall be an appointed office.

Section 3. The Publications Committee shall consist of the Editor as Chairman and such members as he deems necessary to assist him in his work.

Section 4. The Membership Committee shall welcome new members to the society and shall direct an active campaign to increase membership; Chairmanship to be appointed.

Section 5. The Publicity Committee shall carry on a program to acquaint the general public with the existence, purposes, activities and accomplishments of the society. The Committee shall institute a Speakers' Bureau and shall notify other garden and flower societies of its existence. The Chairman of this Committee shall serve as AIS Bulletin Representative.

Section 6. The Ways and Means Committee shall promulgate and activate ways and means of raising money needed by the society, over and above the regular receipts of dues, and for such projects as the society may sponsor. Chairman to be appointed.

Section 7. The Library Committee shall catalog the historical data of the society and shall collect and maintain as much information of a scientific, horticultural, and general nature about Pacific Coast Iris as possible to assemble. This Committee shall also encourage the collection of color slides and black and white photographs of reprintable size and quality and shall distribute these on a loan basis. A complete check list of registered clones shall also be maintained by this Committee.

Section 8. The Chairmen of the various Standing Committees shall report directly to the President in such a maner as shall be designated.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

Any proposed amendment to these By-Laws which has the approval of a majority of the Executive Committee will be submitted to the membership by publication in the Newsletter. Any such proposed amendment will become effective three months after publication unless within that three month period five members in good standing have notified the President of the society that they desire a vote on the proposed amendment. Any proposed amendment brought to a vote will be ratified by a majority of votes cast.

JUDGING CLASSIFICATIONS

by George Stambach

In talking with Vern McCaskill, who has been an accredited camelia judge (during) the entire existence of such a position, he said over the years they have brought in new, extra large flowers from the Orient which have completely changed the local varieties and their hybrids to such an extent that they have had to revamp their ideas on judging camelias over the years. The reticulatas and their hybrids were so large and different that they had to put them in a separate class by themselves because they were so different from the japonicas. Therefore, the japonicas are in a class by themselves and even the japonicas are developing small flowers which should not be judged with the larger japonicas. They have made different classifications for each of those. There are still smaller japonicas which are known as miniatures and a special classification has been made for those also. Therefore, all these varieties have to be judged separately. While it makes more work for the judges, it is fairer for the people who raise the different types of camelias.

Now, it is coming to the point where the same thing is happening to our Pacific Coast native iris. As I mentioned before about the large native iris, it should not be competing with the hundreds of smaller named varieties. Among the named varieties there are also variations in size. Some are smaller than others, but there should be a standard set as to what the size is, even if by inches. Then there is another classification of still smaller iris such as the innominata and their hybrids which should be in a classification by themselves and not have to compete with the larger regular named varieties. There is still another classification of smaller iris which might be classified as miniatures. I myself have produced quite a number of these miniatures over the years as perhaps some of the rest of you have. Therefore, it seems imperative we should follow the example of the Camelia Society so there will be fair judging for everyone who enters in any of these classes. Special AIS awards could be given to the best of each of these classifications.

Editor's note: The above article was abstracted from a letter written during the author's recent illness and dictated to his daughter. The idea has merit as a means of equalizing the judging of various size flowers. While it is true that the judges should not select the winner on size alone, judges are only human and a large bloom does have the advantage in many situations. The Gladiolus Society also uses a classification based on the size of the bloom for a well grown specimen of the variety. This provides five size classifications which may be further subdivided into color classes. What do you think?

SYDNEY B. MITCHELL

by Maria-Theresa Olson

It is very appropriate and very fitting that the new AIS Award for Pacific Coast Irises has been designated the Mitchell Award, in honor of Sydney B. Mitchell. To me, particularly, the news of that designation was good news, and it stimulated many vivid memories. That is because for many years we were close friends, close neighbors and fellow irisarians. In each of those relationships, his association was so memorable that we, now living at our retirement property near Valley Center in the backcountry of San Diego County, frequently reminisce about Mitchell even to this day.

Sydney Mitchell was a remarkable man. Physically he was handicapped. But mentally he was highly superior. His energy exceeded that of the most physically athletic of his associates. His personality was overwhelming. Midst any group of people he was the focal point because of his personal magnetism and his brilliant mind.

Back in 1937 Sydney Mitchell was the Head of the School of Librarianship at the University of California at Berkeley, and Dr. Ronald Olson, my husband, was Professor of Anthropology. In those days, space was not at the premium it now commands, and my husband and I lived on a three acre plot near Lafayette, in the hills behind Berkeley. That space was more than enough for our own home and garden and for our irises, so we offered Sydney Mitchell the free use of our excess land for some of his irises. He accepted the offer, and in the following year - incidental to all of his other activities - he, himself, planted 6,000 of his own seedlings on our property. That figure is very tangible evidence of his energy, and it was a matter of amazement to other irisarians of that era who lived in the area. These included hybridizer Carl Salbach, who was Mitchell's next-door neighbor, and Ira B. Cross, of the College of Commerce, who achieved fame by being voted the most popular professor at the University.

Sydney Mitchell operated a commercial iris business as a sideline to his profession as an educator, and once he stated in confidence that his income from iris sales was greater than the income that he was receiving from the University of California. But he did not look at his iris work as a business; rather his attitude was that the improvement of irises was his assigned mission on earth. With him, iris hybridizing was an intense thing, and his self-imposed rules were so stringent that his seedlings to iris introductions ratio was probably in the neigh-

borhood of 10,000 to 1. (Contemporary hybridizers might take a moment to compute the comparable ratio for themselves, and thus measure themselves by Mitchell's standards.)

In addition to his other work with irises, Mitchell frequently made speeches about irises and he frequently wrote about them. His book Iris for Every Garden, with illustrations by Tom Craig, to this day remains a standard reference in every horticultural library.

Sydney Mitchell particularly admired Pacific Coast irises. He recognized, just as we do, that in natural attractive charm the Pacific Coast irises rate above nearly all other flowers, including other iris types. In an effort to develop a garden iris with the charm of Iris douglasiana, but with the hardiness to permit its use in all over the nation, he repeatedly tried to cross I. douglasiana with various dwarf bearded irises; this effort was not successful. Then he crossed various Pacific Coast iris species with the goal of obtaining a hybrid with a blossom which accurately could be described as "red". When he became convinced that these and other goals could not be achieved by use of regular hybridizing procedures, he then turned to an alternate procedure: that of stimulated mutations. He and we negotiated with E. O. Lawrence, the famed scientist of Nobel Prize prestige who had jurisdiction of the new atom-smashing cyclotron up in the Berkeley hills. As a result, the cyclotron was diverted from its primary mission of smashing atoms to a less ominous assignment of zapping doses of radiation into thousands of Sydney Mitchell's and our iris seeds. We anticipated that many of the seeds would be killed, and that some of the remainder would be weakened, but that those which subsequently grew would exhibit a greatly enhanced percentage of mutations. These anticipations were realized. But, unhappily, few if any of the mutations were the hoped for breaks to beautiful new colors and forms. Rather, the mutations ran to mottled, dirty colors, to ugly stunted forms and to freaks. This major disappointment seemed to dim the hope and anticipation which had been Mitchell's driving force. Subsequently, when he was the dinner speaker at a San Francisco Convention of the California Horticultural Society, his disappointment showed. He advised the assembled horticulturalists to turn their attention away from irises because there could be little further "advancement"; he said that progress with irises had reached "the end of the road."

(Continued on page 13.)

This old snapshot was taken in 1939 on the lawn of the Olsen ranchette in Lafayette, California. From left to right are shown Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Peyton Hurt, and Maria-Theresa Olson, the author. Dr. Ronald Olson, the author's husband could not get into the picture because he was the photographer.



SOME GOALS IN BREEDING THE CALIFORNICAE

by R. C. Richards



Pacific Coast Native
iris seedling.

With the rapidly increasing popularity of the Californicae or Pacific Coast native iris, it is perhaps time for someone to get some thoughts on paper with regard to the directions the breeding of these attractive little iris may profitably go. I realize that at least some of these remarks will not be popular with everyone. Nevertheless I set them down to stimulate some thinking on this subject, with the hope that by thinking now we can avoid some of the mistakes which have been made in the past in breeding other types of iris.

Perhaps one of the biggest mistakes that has been made in the past, primarily by tall bearded iris breeders, is the subordination of all else to the flower. Thus we have increasingly larger numbers of tall bearded iris with unattractive growth habits, prone to any number of diseases, and requiring such specialized care that only a masochist or a martyr would grow very many of them. I say this valuing many people who do grow them in large numbers and love them, and I grow a few of them myself. But outside the garden of the iris enthusiast, you see very few tall bearded iris being grown, and the ones that you do see are usually very old clones.

In setting some breeding goals for the Californicae, it seems wise to consider both the traits of the iris and the needs of the average gardener. Since these iris are a west coast native plant, they share some of the traits of other west coast native plants, and if these traits may be partly negative, it seems to be of no value to intentionally or unintentionally intensify the negative traits in the attempt to breed for only one or two desirable qualities. Let me list some of these quirks as well as some of the positive traits that ought to be considered in a breeding program.

The first quirk is that not all the various species and hybrids can cope with the amount of water the average garden gets in the summer. In their native habitat they get very little

(Richards Continued)

water during the summer in most cases, and thus are downright unhappy with the summer water that they get in the average garden unless the drainage is quite good. It seems to me that this indicates we ought to give careful attention as breeding stock to the species and hybrids which are more water tolerant, and this includes Iris douglasiana and I. innominata. These species and hybrids from these species tend to be capable of finding a home in fairly damp summer gardens, and thus make valuable parents. Related to this is another fine trait possessed by I. douglasiana, namely, the ability to thrive in the heavy clay soils so prevalent in Southern California, a condition many other species and hybrids will not tolerate. Also related to the ability to thrive on summer water is attractiveness of foliage. Both I. douglasiana and I. innominata have fairly attractive summer foliage, something which cannot be said of a number of other species. Obviously hybridizing with I. douglasiana is valuable, and since it tends to have branching in later generations, as well as having it in many cases when collected from the wild, it is a parent well worth considering.

While on the subject of these two species and their hybrids, it might be best to indicate some of the traits possessed by either or both which ought to be guarded against as undesirable. The first trait is that they both tend to produce stems which are much too long and weak, especially when grown in partial shade. The stems will wander along the ground like drunken anacondas, and perhaps deposit the flower upside down in the mud. I. douglasiana has another trait that many people find undesirable, and that is the tendency to grow too rankly and to wander about the garden. The new shoots come up rather far from the plant, and soon it is displacing other plants in the area. I. innominata, on the other hand, forms neat clumps and seems free of this vice. It is not free of the long and weak stem vice, however.

A second quirk that native iris have, at least to some extent, is that many species and quite a few hybrids will thrive only in full or nearly full sun. Such clones not only are limited to the area of the garden in which they will grow, which in itself seems to me to be undesirable, but such clones also tend to look rather shabby all summer long, especially if they do not get very much water. It seems to me that one thing that breeders ought to select for is the ability to thrive in a semi-shaded location. In full sun locations the native iris must compete for space in the garden of the iris enthusiast with all other species and clones, and there is a definite need for an iris which will thrive in semi-shaded or shaded locations. Few species will thrive in heavy shade, though I. munzii comes very close to this in its native habitat, and thus should make a valuable parent in seeking a shade-loving native iris. It also has quite sturdy stems when grown in the shade, and so it can make up for some of the deficiencies of other species and hybrids in this area.

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Some of the clones of the Californicae appear prone to mysterious ailments not yet understood. They occasionally suffer from some sort of fungus. This is variable; some clones seem especially susceptible, while others are virtually free of the trait. Would it be unwise to suggest that breeding not be done with clones showing tendencies to fungus or other ailments, and that such clones never be registered or distributed, no matter how attractive the flower? It is no service to anyone if we get such traits established in the genetic pool available to breeders.

Naturally enough frightfully few of us grow the Californicae for their foliage. Right now the trend in breeding seems to be for size of flower and width of flower parts. I think this is a worthwhile goal. But I think we ought to avoid cutting ourselves off from other considerations. Bigness is not necessarily greatness, nor is smallness necessarily mediocrity. There are many pure *I. innominata* clones and hybrids which are quite small and quite attractive. Part of their appeal consists of their daintiness. I believe we should not overlook them in our mad rush to produce something as big as a waterlily. Perhaps the flower arrangers with their appreciation for the petite will keep us honest. If we lose the ability to appreciate and enjoy these little beauties, our lives and the lives of those to come after us will be that much the poorer. Indeed, it might be a good idea to set up a separate class strictly for the little clones, with standards carefully specified. Otherwise it is quite possible that these mini-Cals will be overlooked in the race for bigness.

Width of flower parts is appealing. But width is not the only consideration. The wider the flower part, the better the substance the flower must have. I have seen some wide flowers which had so little substance that they look like Japanese iris, and had lost the ethereal beauty which the Californicae possess. Occasionally a flower with parts that are not wide has a great deal of appeal, and I do not think we should overlook these, especially if other good traits are present. One occasionally finds such a flower in the wild. I am not saying that every scraggy little wild iris should be introduced or even used for breeding. Or that every hybrid in the garden which looks like a wild iris is valuable. Such appeal is not common in wild iris populations, but it does occur. When it does occur, either in the wild or in our seedling beds, I think we ought to keep it, let others see if it delights them also, perhaps enter it in seedling classes at shows, and if it appeals to many people, we ought to consider registering it. Several very popular introductions in the last few years have been collected straight from the wild, and this is a good trend.

I think we ought also to try to keep a sense of balance in

(Richards Continued)

mind with regard to the relation of foliage to flower. Occasionally we get a flower that is too large or too small for its foliage. I. innominata occasionally plays the former trick on us, with its thin and dainty foliage. It may develop a flower much too large for the foliage.

If what I have been saying has any merit, it would imply that we ought to be doing a lot of garden judging with regard to the Californicae, and much less bench judging. What is needed in the way of a satisfactory plant is not a garden fright which occasionally in its sunny and dry spot in the garden, gives a preposterously large flower as its swan song. What we need is a plant which will thrive with summer water in a semi-shaded location, is relatively disease free, and which will give attractive flowers on strong, sturdy stems and will look attractive all year around. And it ought to transplant easily in the proper season.

Some clones simply do not transplant well, while others seem hardly disturbed. In order to judge all this, we are going to need a very knowledgeable group of judges, and the emphasis should be on garden judging. Unfortunately such judges will be hard to find. In spite of the continued delight I feel in watching some judges in action, I fear that most judges are interested primarily or even exclusively in the tall bearded iris, and the vast majority of these do, at best, a mediocre job in judging the native classes at shows, much less in the garden. Education must occur. We need more training sessions devoted to the Californicae, and these should be garden sessions, stressing garden traits. While one cannot see all the good traits of a clone in one trip to one garden, it will at least establish clearly the principle that performance in the garden is crucial. There are some named varieties that have very undesirable garden habits. This should not happen in the future. And since it may take a year or two for a clone to become established after transplanting, we should be very careful about judging any clone on the strength of the first or even second year flower.

If the Californicae are going to really improve, breeders are going to have to try their best seedlings under a variety of conditions. This means that breeders should try to place their seedlings as guests in different gardens out of their particular climatic conditions in order to see how they perform. The importance of this was brought to my attention by one well known clone, registered several years ago, which performs well only in certain locations. It is spectacular where it is happy. But in a large number of gardens it is average. I have heard people question why it was registered because it does so poorly in some gardens. When a clone is introduced, hopefully it will be with the assurance that it has done well in a number of diverse climates.

A word seems to be in order here about fertilizer. To fertilize or not to fertilize is perhaps not an earth-shaking question in every hamlet, but it seems to me that if our goal is to produce

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(Richards Continued)

a plant that is happy and appreciated in most gardens, it must get along under a wide range of conditions, and that includes no artificial fertilizer. Therefore a breeder ought not to use any fertilizer. If he uses fertilizer, he may select a plant that cannot perform well without it, and since it will not get any fertilizer in many gardens, the buyer or other grower of the iris will be unhappy with its mediocre performance, and he will have evil thoughts about the stock and perhaps his judgement, if not the ancestry, of the breeder. No sincere breeder needs this. So it seems to me that to use fertilizer in the garden of the breeder at least, is undesirable.

Much more could be said, but I think this is enough. This represents my thinking at this time, and my reasons and my conclusions. I reserve the right to disagree with anything I have said here at some future time. But I think a general statement of goals is needed, and I have attempted to supply one. I see no reason in theory why the Californicae cannot, on the west coast at least, become the most gardenable as well as the most charming iris grown, and find a home in the garden of iris lovers and the general gardening public.

Editor's note: Dick certainly covered a lot of subjects in his excellent article. What do you think of his stated goals?

(Olson Continued)

In retrospect, we know that he was very wrong in his evaluation. But that is hindsight. Yes, it is most befitting that the new award for Pacific Coast irises is named in the honor of Sydney B. Mitchell. Irises were his hope and his motivating force. He lived for them. And in some of our gardens, a few of the iris varieties which Mitchell himself originated still are grown and cared for in his memory.

IMMIGRANTS TO EUROPE

by Thornton M. Abell

Last spring I was invited to be on a panel of judges at the international iris competition in Florence. When I was packing, I looked around for some little gifts to take to iris friends I might see in Europe. I noticed a great deal of munzii hybrid seeds that had not yet been planted. I divided the seeds into little packets and took them along, just in case anyone might be interested. I also took slides of the munzii hybrid flowers by Dr. Lee Lenz growing in the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, as well as slides of my own seedlings, munzii hybrid and douglasiana types growing in our garden.

In Florence, in Flaminia Specht's beautiful garden, I found quite a group of douglasiana seedlings just finished blooming. They seemed very much at home there. She was pleased to get some of the seeds and I am sure she will have a patch of more seedlings before long. I showed my slides one evening in Florence. The flowers were much admired and everyone was anxious to try to grow them.

Oskar Stahel, who was one of the judges, is from Zurich, and is president of the Swiss Iris and Lily Society. On my way home from Florence, I stopped to see him and his lovely garden. He was building a cool greenhouse and he plans to try growing the seeds I gave him. He will pot the plants and return them to the greenhouse in colder weather. It just may work.

In London, Harold Fletcher had a fine bed of douglasiana seedlings, some of which were still in bloom. They do very well there and he had some lovely varieties. Harold was pleased to try my seeds.

At the iris shows in England, Mrs. Marjorie Brummitt, who lives in Banbury, northwest of London, has been taking cups and prizes for her varieties of pacific coast irises. She had tried pure munzii seeds sent to her by Dr. Lee Lenz, but had found the plants not entirely hardy in England. She was anxious to try the munzii hybrid seeds as she felt that the addition of douglasiana and other more hardy pacific coast iris blood might retain the blue of the munzii and still grow well in Banbury. I have just received a letter from Leonard Brummitt and he told me that Marjorie's seeds have germinated and there are plants coming along.

It was such an exciting trip, meeting so many interesting people and seeing their gardens, but the most fun was their interest in the munzii hybrid seeds I had brought, and their hope to grow them there. Maybe some will adjust, settle down and become residents.

TREASURER'S REPORT
SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRIS

Statement of receipts and expenditures from inception to September 1, 1973.

DUES

Life Membership	\$50.00
Triennial Family	48.00
Triennial Individual	90.00
Annual Family	40.00
Annual Individual	88.00
\$1.00 Donations	<u>9.00</u>

TOTAL RECEIPTS \$325.00

EXPENDITURES

Stamps	\$10.00
Postcards	6.00
Stationery supplies	7.08
Printing membership applications	9.85
Postage for applications (donation)	0.00
Printing checks	<u>2.79</u>

TOTAL EXPENDITURES 35.72

TOTAL FUNDS ON HAND \$289.28

Life membership reserve in savings account 50.00

Balance in checking account \$239.28

Reserve for 1974 membership dues 46.00

Reserve for 1975 membership dues 46.00

FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR CURRENT YEAR \$147.28

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SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRIS

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HOW DO THEY GROW?

Often when faced with the decision of which new Pacific Coast iris variety to purchase, the gardener does not want to take the chance of buying a plant that does not grow well in his geographic area. All of the Pacific Coast iris hybrids do not perform equally well in all areas, yet most new introductions are hardy in some gardens or else they would not have been registered. Candid comments on the growth habits of a particular variety will enable us to publish performance data. Provided that there is sufficient interest shown in the appeal for this information, by the next issue of the newsletter, it may be possible to provide a general evaluation of the newer irises. Evaluations of the varieties which were considered for this year's Mitchell and Riddle Awards, as well as any clone introduced since 1971, are welcome and should be sent to the editor for compilation of results. In case you have forgotten, the specific varieties which were eligible for the awards were:

Amiguita	Grubstake	Pasatiempo
Aptos	Native Music	Ripple Rock
Califia	Ojai	Valley Banner
Claremont Indian	Orchid Sprite	Violet Elf

The ratings and comments will be divided into three geographic regions of the Pacific Coast: Northwest, Northern California and Southern California. With these divisions, any variation in the performance of an iris in different climates will be evident.

Judging of each variety should follow the guidelines presented in Chapter 19 of the Handbook for Judges and Show Officials, Fourth Edition. The points for judging are:

Plant - 25 points. Vigor and good health.

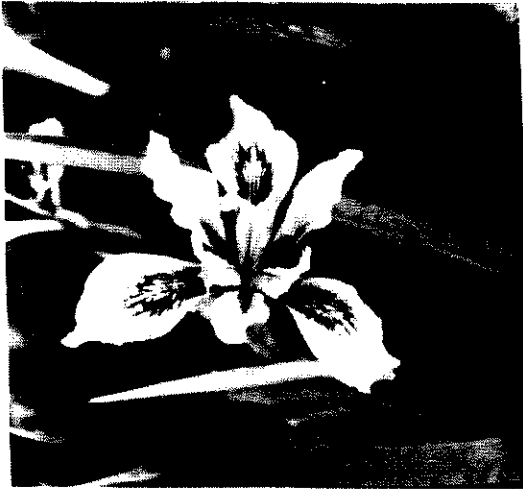
Stalk - 25 points. Sturdy enough to hold flowers erect.

Flower - 50 points. Size alone does not make for superiority. Substance, color and texture together with size are to create a feeling of good balance.

Comments on this type of judging are also appropriate, since the judging standards for Pacific Coast irises are not well established.

At the "All Iris Show" held on October 7, 1972 in South Africa, John Adan took the blue ribbon in class 25, South African bred Pacific Coast iris. More to follow if we can track down Mr. Adan.

ED'S PAGE



SUSIE KNAPP
(Philips 1971)
Blooming at Cordon Bleu
Farms after a rare April
shower in San Diego County.

One of the benefits of being editor is that you get a page for germane and wise comments on the subject of pacific coast native irises all of your own. Unfortunately, another of the uses for the page is to correct editorial errors made in previous issues. Well one of the purposes of the Almanac is to educate, and I for one am being educated. It would seem that I was the only member of our new society who did not realize that Margot Holmes was not a pacific coast native iris. I hope that the alert readership will continue to inform me of any future errors, and I further hope that there will not be too many.

Many of you may be curious as to why is it the Almanac? Well faced with the job of coming up with a title for our newsletter, I considered such original names as the newsletter, the bulletin and such, but I did not feel that they had enough "zing" for a brand new society. Then one day I found an almanac described as a miscellany of useful information, though some of dubious merit, including entertaining remarks, pithy and scientific observations, together with remedies for sundry ailments, both grave and trivial. I thought that this was indeed an excellent description of what I expected our newsletter to be. Thus the Almanac.

Ray Chesnik asked me to include the information that copies of the Almanac will accompany letters to the President and Directors of the AIS asking that the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris be admitted to the AIS as a section. Our by-laws, our membership in such a short time, and our sound financial status, not to mention our enthusiasm, cannot help but be an asset to the AIS.

ED.

Almanac of the Society for
Pacific Coast Native Iris
Edward J. Pasahow, Editor
6235 Syracuse Lane
San Diego, California 92122

THIRD CLASS