

Pacific Iris

Almanac of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris



I. tenax

Some Jean Witt watercolours



Iris munzii



Iris innominata



Iris tenax seedpods



Iris tenax

These images courtesy of the American Iris Society.

To see more of Jean Witt's work visit : <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view/Hist/GalleryOfWittArt>

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**PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE
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Prices listed are for SPCNI members in the US.

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PRINT ARTICLES

Check List of named PCI species and cultivars, 2005
Lists species and named cultivars and hybrids to 2005. \$9.00
If ordering both print and CD checklist versions together,
\$14.00

A Guide to the Pacific Coast Irises

Victor A. Cohen, 1967

Reprint of British Iris Society 1967 booklet, describing
species, sub-species and distributions. 40 pages, \$8.00

A Revision of the Pacific Coast Irises Lee W. Lenz,
1958 Reprint of Aliso journal article 5.5x8.5, 72 pages. \$8.00

Hybridization and Speciation in the Pacific Coast Irises
Lee W. Lenz, 1959. Reprint of Aliso article 72 pages, \$8.00

If ordering both of Dr Lenz's reprints, \$14.00

All three volumes, \$20.00

Diseases of the Pacific Coast Iris

Lewis & Adele Lawyer, 1986. Fall 1986 Almanac, 22 pages,
\$4.50

Almanac Index, 2005,

includes the following indices: author, subject, species,
hybrids, \$4.00, or download free PDF from the SPCNI
website.

COMPACT DISCS

SPCNI Photo CD, 2009.

Compiled by Ken Walker, this CD includes 423 photos of
species and hybrids, neatly labeled. \$9.00.

SPCNI Almanac CD, 2009.

All issues of the Almanac through 2007, with Index, also
through 2007, and Checklist of species and hybrids, through
2005. PDF formats. \$15.00

Check List of named PCI species and cultivars CD, 2005.

Lists species and registered cultivars and hybrids of PCI
through 2005; CD, \$9.00.

Welcome to the Beauty of Pacific Coast Iris CD, 2009.

A 15-minute presentation with a concise overview of PCN
species, early hybridizers, Mitchell Award and Medal win-
ners, gardens landscaped with PCIs, and culture tips.

Ready to play for individuals or groups, \$9.00

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SPCNI has a users group site at

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/PacificIris/>.

Members are encouraged to join this group, which provides
a simple online way to ask questions about finding and
growing PCIs among all members. To join this site, you
must register with Yahoo, but do not need a Yahoo e-mail
account. You may post photos here, check on scheduled
activities, and contact other SPCNI members.

Editor's notes

This edition has two themes. Firstly, we pay our
last respects to that remarkable irisarian Jean
Witt, who passed earlier this year. She was a
mentor and dear friend for many of our members
who will be keenly feeling her loss. We publish
two obituaries, and we reprint an article Jean
contributed to the *Almanac* in 2000.

Jean's artwork and photography also feature.
One of her watercolors of PCI species features
on the cover of this issue, as well as being high-
lighted inside the cover. Her photographs of
inter-specific hybrids, and her notes on these
photographs, appear near the rear.

At a time when we are thinking about Jean's
place in the history of PCI growing, it is fitting
that our other theme for this issue is about the
future, especially the way the PCI is likely to
evolve.

Another very early member of the SPCNI,
Richard Richards, has joined a variety of
members in their views on this matter. As part
of my research for my piece on the subject, I
looked through all the old issues of *Pacific Iris*,
and its predecessor, the *Almanac*, and I have to
say that Richard has been remarkably consistent
in his views on this matter.

Unusually for an editor, I received more copy
that I could place in this season's issue! If you are
one of the many who responded to my request
for views on the future of PCIs, and your views
are not represented here, do not worry. The next
issue will air your views, plus those of a few
extra correspondents who are keen to
contribute. If you have not written yet, and
something in this issue urges you to put pen to
paper (or finger to keyboard) please share your
views with the rest of us.

As always, enjoy the garden and make sure you
contribute to the seed pool if you can,.

All the best from New Zealand

Gareth

Jean Witt—an ‘Extraordinary Life’

Jean Gleason Witt, 1921-2016

Jean Witt had a self-described ‘Extraordinary Life’!

She was born Dorothy ‘Jean’ Gleason in Ellensburg, WA March 27, 1921 to Emma (Scholes) and Jay M. Gleason. She grew up in the apple country of the Yakima Valley, WA. Her family moved to Spokane, WA in 1936, where she graduated from Lewis and Clark High School in 1938.

Jean attended Washington State College (now WSU), majoring in Botany, where she met her future husband Joseph A. Witt. She graduated in 1943, but World War II interrupted their lives when Joe went to serve in the Army. She served her country as an Army munitions inspector at Mukilteo, WA. Jean and Joe were married in June 1945. They went on to complete their Masters Degrees in Botany at WSC, spending summers working for the U.S. Forest Service as fire lookouts and part of fire suppression crews in Idaho and Montana.

They moved to Seattle in 1950 where Joe had opportunities with the University of Washington Arboretum (now the U of W Botanical Gardens), and started their family of three daughters: Emily (Kozie), Nancy (Wunn), and Martha (Sleeper). The family moved to what is now Shoreline, WA where Jean lived for nearly 50 years before “retiring” to Wesley Homes in Des Moines, WA.

Joe passed in 1984, but Jean continued and expanded her lifelong passion for iris breeding.

She was a “backyard hybridizer”. Over the years she earned many awards and accolades for her iris. Jean became nationally and internationally renowned for her work, and was always willing to share her knowledge. She was a member of numerous garden clubs and in high demand as a speaker. Jean was an artist, loved to write and was an avid quilt maker. All of her children and grandchildren have beautiful quilts she crafted especially for them. Throughout her long life Jean stayed interested in the natural sciences, philosophy, and current events.

She was enormously proud of her grandchildren, and encouraged them to follow their individual passions. They spoke of her as “the most interesting person I know!” Sadly, two of her six grandchildren, Ryan Kozie and Chelsea Wunn predeceased her.

Jean passed peacefully at age 95 on August 27, 2016 with her daughters at her side. She is survived by her daughters and their spouses: Daniel Kozie, Ricard Wunn and Bradley Sleeper, and grandchildren Adam Kozie and Lasara Jarvis; Dianne Sleeper; Jacklyn Sleeper and Mark Van Wormer; and Trevor and Jenny (Lacrosse) Wunn. The service was private.

Remembrances in her name may be sent to the University of Washington Botanical Gardens.



Jean Witt—obituary

by Stephanie Markham and Kevin Vaughn

The iris world lost one of its greatest ambassadors and enlightened thinkers with the recent passing of Jean G. Witt.

Jean Witt was involved in the growing, breeding and promotion of irises for more than seven decades. Her botany degree and genetics training sparked an interest in hybridizing in the 1940s, with the irises she had purchased during WWII providing interesting subjects for experiments.

In the 50s, when Alice White (the White of the Williamson-White Award/Medal) was looking for people interested in breeding MTBs (or Table Irises, as they were more commonly called then) Jean was among the first to join her round robin (correspondence group). She and other robin members spent a great deal of time and energy tracking down and evaluating old varieties and figuring out how to breed new ones in the petite configurations they wanted, leading to the establishment of MTBs as a separate class and the definition of the MTB standards. While most of her median hybridizing was in MTBs, Jean was involved in the preservation, distribution and utilization of iris species, many of which have been critical to the development of median cultivars.

Jean joined the Median Iris Society soon after it was founded and contributed greatly over the years, applying and sharing her well-deep knowledge of botany, genetics, and iris species with everyone, both in print and in personal correspondence.

In the 1960s and 70s, when it was difficult to market non-TB irises, Jean joined forces with other breeders to put out a price list of dwarf and median irises. She obtained a nursery license and continued to market MTBs and species until her husband's death in 1984.

She wrote numerous articles for *The Medianite* (for which she served as guest editor of several MTB specials), the AIS Bulletin, and several section publications (SIGNA, HIPS, SPCNI and others) as well as for books such as *The World of Irises* (for which she provided both pictures and text) and Currier McEwen's *The Siberian Iris* (for which she provided watercolors and line drawings).

She gave innumerable talks on irises to local garden clubs, plant societies and elsewhere, was an AIS judge, and mentored numerous iris hybridizers and enthusiasts, donating freely of her time, talent, knowledge, experience and irises. She received the AIS Distinguished Service Medal in 1983 and the AIS Hybridizer Award in 2012. In 2015, Jean received the Bennett C. Jones Award for Outstanding Median Hybridizing, in recognition of her long years and many contributions to median iris hybridizing.



Jean's work with species and species hybrid irises was also impressive. She worked hard to popularize and create new varieties of Cal-Sibes, using improved selections of both the 40-chromosome siberians and Pacific Coast Natives. These hybrids allowed gardeners in climates where PCNs could not be grown, to grow something similar to these plants.

Through her Northwest Hybridizers catalogs not only these species hybrids but also a number of selections of less often grown species were offered for sale, greatly increasing interest in the “other” irises.

Jean was an enthusiastic supporter of the SIGNA seed exchange, serving as its director, and contributing many unique seeds from her own garden. Besides these services to SIGNA, Jean produced a beautiful series of watercolors and edited the species checklist for the group. Jean even led some of the treks of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris, to show others how these species grow in the wild. One of her Siberian iris introductions, ‘Flight of Butterflies’, is a charming short *sibirica* type plant. Its introduction and marketing by perennial juggernaut White Flower Farm has made this one of the most distributed Siberian iris.

Jean registered 32 MTBs and two BBs, as well as two PCNs, five Siberians, five species irises and 14 species hybrids. She also introduced five MTBs on behalf of four other people. Her first MTB, registered in 1962 and introduced in 1966, was the white and pale blue amoena ‘Ice Fairy’ (‘Pewee’ X ‘Mrs. Andrist’), which won an HM in 1968, a Judge’s Choice in 1969, and the Williamson-White Award in 1973. A very good start!

Her bright yellow MTB, ‘Spanish Coins’ (1976), won an HM in 1977 and the Williamson-White Award in 1981. Both of these irises are still widely grown and used in MTB breeding today, as are several of her other MTB introductions, many of which have either bearded species or antique TBs (or both) in their pedigrees, such as ‘Dappled Pony’ (1981, HM 1984), a dotted-all-over violet-on-white plicata, and, more recently, the AM-winning ‘Redrock Princess’ (2006, HM 2008, AM 2010), a ruffled brown and rose-red bicolor — the pedigrees of both of these include the small diploid species *I. reginae* as well as the antique diploid yellow TB ‘Pluie d’Or’ (Cayeux 1928). These non-Williamson-derived MTBs have greatly enhanced the genetic base of the MTBs.

Jean continued to hybridize even into her ninth decade. Her most recent MTB introductions are ‘Little White Tiger’, a petite white and violet-striped amoena, introduced in 2013 by Aitken’s Salmon Creek Garden and her Cal-Sibe ‘Fauxmo’ (a flower that resembles *I. missouriensis*), introduced by Cascadia Gardens in 2013.

Some of her most recent MTB seedlings were on display in the Portland convention gardens, including # 10-13-2N- a variegata-plicata with pale yellow standards and the lightest sanding of red-violet dotting in the center of the falls, and another really interesting variegata MTB seedling (14-11-3C) with ‘Rhages’ (Meade-Riedel 1934) in the parentage. This flower glows when the sun hits it, to appear nearly orange. Jean allowed us to name this very outstanding hybrid in her honor.



In sum, Jean was a true iris pioneer over the course of more than seven decades, and continued to experiment with her iris hybridizing, explore iris species and actively participate in the discussion about irises right up to her passing. Thank you, Jean, for all of your contributions to irises! Amazingly, she accomplished all of this in a small urban garden and an even smaller plot in her retirement village. One can only wonder what she could have done with acres.

Pacific Coast Irises - What I Grow and Why I Like Them

Jean Witt, Seattle, Washington
ex *Almanac*, Fall 2000 Vol.29, No.1: 8-9

Photographs by the author



Witt seedling from seed collected by George Gessert

We had wild irises – *Iris missouriensis* – where I grew up in eastern Washington. Then, after I joined the American Iris Society, I found that the world was full of irises. I set about collecting as many species as I could, including *I. douglasiana* and other Pacific Coast Irises. I learned we had a second native species in southwestern Washington - *I. tenax*. I even managed to collect a plant or two on the way to Portland before the freeway was put in.

I liked the dainty PCI flowers, and the plants did well in my suburban Seattle garden, so I kept adding a few more species and named clones - old standbys like 'Agnes James', 'Amiguita', 'Ami Royale', and 'Golden Nymph'. All were apparently well suited to Seattle's glacial soil and winter-wet climate. They may lack "modern" flower form, but their performance is impeccable.

Several clones of *I. innominata* were given to me by Roy Davidson and others, from their collecting trips in southwestern Oregon in the 1960s. Again, many of these proved very durable in the garden. Perhaps the best is an orange-yellow form of *I. innominata*.



Witt seedling

One that didn't make it - to my regret - was a bing-cherry-colored flower of that same species. A medium blue *I. tenax* with a darker blue thumbprint from the Oregon Cascades is another I'd like to try again.

Iris bracteata grew well for me for many years, but finally seems to have disappeared. The *I. purdyi* cultivar 'Memoria Elwood' departed to summer rot a year or two ago after many years' residence, but left behind interesting seedlings; other clones not quite so elegant now take its place. *I. chrysophylla*, collected in the Oregon Cascades, is happy along the walk on the south side of the house. It even sets seed - tiny short - stemmed capsules with very few seeds.

The *I. tenax* X *I. chrysophylla* hybrid 'Valley Banner' cannot be said to be a vigorous grower, but I have managed to keep it going, and it has given me promising seedlings. One is a tiny pale pink with darker pink style arms - too fragile to be a commercial item, but indicative of the inherent possibilities.

Lovely deep blue-violet *I. macrosiphon* succumbed during reworking of the rock garden, but left its genes in the sinister tan/violet "Morticia", with black perianth tube and petal bases. Newer, bluer *I. macrosiphon* seedlings are spreading their white blazes around without any help from me. Two half-*munzii* hybrids from Ben Hager have been with me for 25-30 years, badly winter-damaged only once in that length of time. Eventually I hope to get around to combining these with my best *I. tenax*.

I've had several of Joe Ghio's older things long enough to consider them permanent. 'Councilman' is always the first PCI of the season and I wouldn't be without it. 'Ignacio', 'Big Money', 'Junipero', and 'Restless Native' are others of his that have been successful.



Flower with halos

I've tried to collect plants from a variety of breeders and different venues. 'Creamy Custard' raised by the late "Red" Logan of Tacoma, is a vigorous pale yellow.

The white flowered 'Canyon Snow' and 'Western Queen' have been quite successful. 'Antique Jewel', gold with a bleeding red signal, appears to be derived mostly from *I. innominata*, as does a warm white and raspberry red seedling bequeathed me by Leona Mahood.

The late Fred Crandall, a local breeder of tall bearded irises, couldn't resist trying his luck with PCIs, and I inherited several of his seedlings – wide petaled blues and whites.

My preference in PCIs is for the smaller types such as *Iris tenax* X *I. innominata*, or crosses of the various color forms of *I. innominata*, which have given me some very good bright reds in plants of rock garden size.

Unfortunately, these smaller plants do not transplant or ship well. Seed strains could be a possible answer. I also prefer flowers with more of a species look than is currently fashionable; for me they grow better than some of the newer things further removed from the wild.



Violet flower with spot

I don't do much hybridizing any more - too little room and too little energy, so I have yet to realize my goal of a vigorous three-way hybrid combining *Iris tenax*, *I. innominata*, and *I. douglasiana*. I still make occasional crosses of PCIs and a number of Cal-Sibe crosses every year.

Even without planned crosses, new patterns keep popping up in my garden – double halos and spot patterns of many kinds. The most recent were violet flowers with one eighth-inch spots of tiny violet dots near the tips of their white signals, somewhat like a pattern previously described by Dora Sparrow. Offhand, it looks to me as if *I. innominata* is the source of these variations.

There are many reasons why I like PCIs:

- They are ideal plants for the water-conservative garden. I can tuck them into odd corners beyond the reach of the hose.
- Their evergreen leaves maintain their good green color the year around.
- I get about two months bloom from a succession of strains: *I. tenax* and *I. innominata* early, *I. douglasiana* late.
- The blooms make exquisite small-scale flower arrangements, even if the individual flowers are more fleeting than the florist's Dutch irises.
- The ivory and rust seedpods are as good as flowers in dried bouquets.
- PCI clumps don't have to be divided nearly as frequently as bearded irises, and dividing can be postponed by cutting out part of the clump every year or so for plant sales - PCIs are always in demand around here. They grow so easily from seed that hand-pollination is not necessary in order to obtain beautiful seedlings, if garden display rather than introducible varieties is the object.

Pacific Coast Native Irises—the future

Gareth Winter

As might be expected from someone who is a community archivist, someone whose professional life is spent working deep within the annals of his region's history, and someone who spends a lot of his summer time hiking in the mountain range adjacent to the valley where I live, I have a strong interest in the history of gardening in general, and in the evolution of garden flowers.

When I first became active in the SPCNI I was surprised at the dichotomy I could see among its members. There seemed to be two distinct groups, one interested in the wild species and the other primarily interested in the production of a floriferous modern garden plant.

In a way, this split is not unexpected, as it can be seen all over the garden world, and can probably be seen as a reflection of a wider disconnect between differing ways of seeing the world. It may even be regarded as an indication of an intergenerational gap.

So where does the cultivation of garden flowers come from, and is the separation into differing aesthetics common?



The ancient Egyptians valued the blue lotus

The bringing of flowers into the garden from the wild was widespread across ancient civilisations, but it was

far from universal. Throughout large swathes of the world, no attempt was made to domesticate flowering plants for their ornamental value.

For example, it does not seem to have arisen in Africa nor much of North America.

In other parts of the world it flourished. Throughout the classical world, any flowers that differed from the usual – those with double flowers or variegated foliage, for example – were gathered and collected. The wealthy were more likely to undertake this pastime, and they started swapping their curiosities with others who were also interested in ornamental horticulture, and a trade in unusual flowers developed.

There were some plants that were especially favoured. For Europeans, the rose has long held a fascination, and double flowered forms were mentioned by the Greek philosopher Theophrastus in 300 BCE.



Roman mosaic, featuring roses

The Chinese also had an interest in roses, but were more taken by the peony, cultivating many varieties. Many European and Middle Eastern cultures were taken with bearded irises, and their widespread use as a funerary decoration has made it difficult to exactly pinpoint the origin of some varieties.

Although North American First Nations made economic use of Pacific Coast Native Irises, processing them for fibre, making flour out of their seeds, and manufacturing pharmaceuticals from the rhizomes, it does not seem that any species were cultivated for their ornamental value.

Among the English, ornamental flowers went in and out of fashion. At times the wealthy spent a lot of effort cultivating a wide range of flowers, and by the time of William Shakespeare there were already very successful and wealthy nurserymen, devoted to finding the widest possible range of new plants for their customers, and also searching for new novelties among more familiar plants.

Once these plants became more popular and more common, and particularly once they commenced to be cultivated by the middle classes, (or even worse, the working classes) it became thought of as quite vulgar to cultivate the unusual, and there was a pronounced swing to a more naturalistic style of landscaping.

It was the working classes, especially those who were passionately interested in cultivating a small range of particular flowers, who changed the face of home gardening, and their influence is still felt today.



The tulip was a florists' favourite

These people, referred to as 'florists' as they cultivated flowers as opposed to gardens or plants, concentrated on a small number of flowers. The tulip was one of the most favoured for a time, but others became equally well loved – carnations, pinks, auriculas, hyacinths, polyanthus, anemone and ranunculi.

Each flower had a dedicated group of followers, who would compete against each other in large competitions, being judged against a strict set of rules which determined the idealised shape and colouration of each type.



Iris douglasiana shows natural grace and elegance

Some general guides seem to be in force. When a flower was naturally a single, double forms came to be preferred. If the flower shape did not lend itself to doubling, or the double forms were unappealing, the flower would tend to be selected for coloured patterning, and ruffled petals would become prized. Almost always, larger flowers were preferred over smaller, and a rounded form was thought superior to an asymmetric one. The end effect was to make cultivated flowers more and more like each other. Today, we have rose-flowered impatiens, waterlily camellias, anemone-centred peonies, and pansy pelargoniums.

Since its first days, SPCNI members have been aware of the commercial demand for bigger flowers. In the first Almanac, published in September 1973, Richard Richards penned a piece setting out some goals in breeding "Californicae", as PCIs were then called..

As well as calling for breeders to consider elements other than flowers (vigour, disease resistance etc) he was concerned that the rush to breed big flowers would be at the expense of the smaller and daintier clones, even suggesting the “mini-Cals” might become a separate race. He also pointed out the need to breed better substance into flowers, saying that some varieties had become so big, and with such poor substance that they looked like Japanese Iris and had lost the ethereal beauty of Californians.

In the Spring 1985 issue Joe Ghio set out how his interest in PCIs had come about. It was almost accidental – he had been given seed as part of a prize for a bearded iris, and had not looked after the resulting plants very well, but when he saw the first flowering he was astonished at the bloom. They were very different to the wild irises he had seen, and he knew he had to do something with them. His first breakthrough came with ‘Californian Native’, which was the first PCI to show good branching, thick erect foliage, heavy substance, ruffles and a solid signal.



‘Californian Native’ – photo Richard Richards

The direction taken by Ghio and other breeders did not always meet with the approval of all members. Lewis Lawyer wrote in the *Almanac* of Fall 1987, that when a group met in the early days of the SPCNI to formulate judging standards, there was widespread concern that the new larger flowered hybrids would relegate the “cute little flowers” of *I. innominata* derived varieties to an inferior status.

George Gessert, an artist who works with plants, and has been breeding PCIs for many years, has written about the evolution of the modern form in garden plants in his *‘Green Light – toward an art of evolution.’* Among other points, he raises questions about the evolution of the bearded iris, especially the tendency toward intensive ruffling. The book makes for very interesting reading if you have any interest in the history and future of plant breeding.

Gessert admits that the gardening public seems to have a different aesthetic,, conceding that the public does not favour the classic tailored look he admires.

In the iris world, it is not just among the bearded classes that we see changing flower shapes. Many modern Siberian hybrids show clear signs of the flower becoming more rounded, and ruffling is also common among new varieties. The falls are no longer falling, they have more substance and look very similar to modern PCIs.



Bob Hollingworth ‘sSiberian ‘Neptune’s Gold’

Similar trends are very visible in Louisiana irises too. It may be inevitable that the garden PCI will continue to evolve along similar lines.

Those interested in beardless irises rather than PCIs alone may see a different, more inclusive future, where PCIs are just one component in a range of new cultivars, based on hybrids between PCIs and 40-chromosome Siberians. In the diploid form these hybrids, much beloved of Jean Witt who bred them in the 1960s, are sterile. The plants are close enough to cross, but sufficiently different that the offspring are mules. The German daylily and iris breeder Dr Tomas Tamberg has produced some wonderful hybrids with intriguing colour forms.



Thomas Tamberg's Sibcal 'Ray Jeffs'

He has also gone a step further, using colchicine to induce tetraploid forms of PCIs and the *Chrysographes* group of Siberians, and has successfully crossed these to producing fertile hybrids. They will cross among themselves, as well as crossing with either of their parents. In this case Tamberg called the hybrids Sibcals, and has registered a number of his cultivars.



Tomas Tamberg Sibcal SSTT930

They tend to be short-lived in Germany, but it would be very interesting to see how they perform in other climates, and to see where this line of breeding will go.



Tomas Tamberg Sibcal SSTT9343

Not all the world is interested in producing extravagantly coloured flowers. Over the past few years there has been a world-wide increase in the use of native plants. Although younger people are no longer drawn to gardening to the same degree that older people were, there appears to be an increased awareness of ecological values among the young. As an expression of that, there is an increased desire to grow plants that are native to the area where they live.

Australia has seen a huge upsurge of interest in gardening with indigenous plants, and even the English, famed for their enthusiastic adoption of plants from all over the world, are looking to recreate their natural environment where they can. These values are being brought into the garden. In my own country (New Zealand) there is a noticeable decrease in the number of people growing annuals and perennials, and marked increase in the number of more-or-less formal gardens, with lots of grasses, sedges and other native plants, including *Libertia*, the New Zealand Iris..



Libertia ixioides

It seems to me that there will always be a slight schism in our membership, and it is not something we should concern ourselves over. Those who want the latest frilly and ruffled flowers, with rounded form, are going to be able to find them. Those who prefer the elegance of the wild species are going to be able to find what they want too, and there are still plenty of hybridisers who are breeding varieties that fall in between these two types.

Richard C. Richards

Prognostication is at best a suspicious activity. I've never been good at it, and I broke my crystal ball yesterday. I am presently using a glass doorknob with a slight occlusion. I have the occlusion, and not the doorknob.

The SPCNI proceeded to develop a set of judging standards, a publication, and the other details of organization. The judging standards largely resembled the judging standards of the AIS for tall bearded irises, which approximated the thinking of most of the members of the SPCNI. This often involved the assumption that bigger, wider flowers



Iris innominata

It seems reasonable to try to summarize how we got to our present state and where we are in order to get some perspective regarding where we might be going. That is the organizational principle behind these otherwise random comments.

How We Got to Where We Are

There has been, since early in the last century, a small but enthusiastic group of gardeners growing PCIs around the world, and a few doing some hybridizing. This group was, to my knowledge, largely located on the Pacific Coast of the USA, but a small number of enthusiasts were located in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.

The Bay Area of the Pacific Coast had a relatively large group of these people in the early part of the century. In the 1960s, a fairly large group also existed in Southern California. Members of the Southern California group decided to affiliate with the American Iris Society, and the SPCNI was formed as a Section of the AIS.

should be one of the desired goals of the efforts of hybridizers, and would be rewarded on the show bench by judges. The same was true for an emphasis of more flower buds per stem, and perhaps the cultivation of branching on hybrids.

Choice, a friend of mine observed, always involves the sacrifice of a value. To emphasize size, that is, breadth and magnitude of flower parts, acknowledges the value of a larger color patch as an attractive feature of a flower. There is nothing wrong with that assumption. However, we sacrifice the linear charm of what is sometimes called "The Wildflower Look." The dainty, sometimes even fragile form found in the native irises, if not valued, is soon lost by the hybridizers. It does not have to be so, but it mostly is. Hybridizers follow the judging standards, which include the obvious value of relatively large, wide flowers, branched if at all possible.

Also, the largest number of flowers that can be stuffed into a socket is also an unmitigated virtue, despite occasional problems of flowers unable to open because of crowding.

There are problems with such standards. I have mentioned the loss of the Wildflower Look of narrow, dainty, even fragile appearing flowers. Also not emphasized is the fact that some plants, even producing just one bud per socket, will produce many more total flowers per clump than more orthodox irises, even if the latter are branched within an inch of their lives. Plus, we need to consider the observation that branched stalks on PCIs are occasionally too long or heavy to be upright, and gently deposit their flowers upside down in the mud.

A complication is that the length of the flower stem is affected by the amount of sun a plant daily receives. This makes the selection of possible introductions more difficult for the hybridizer.

Another ongoing problem is that most of the species, with some exceptions, are confined to a narrow geographical area in which they thrive. Fortunately, some species prefer conditions that other species shun. An ongoing effort on the part of some hybridizers is to selectively breed to increase the range of geographic locations in which their hybrids can survive.

Also, some people breed PCIs to tolerate summer heat and water, which are fatal to most species and their first or second-generation hybrids. Cold tolerance is shown only by two or perhaps three species or subspecies. If people in the colder or wetter climates, such as the Midwest USA, are to enjoy the beauty of the PCIs, hybridizers are going to have to breed with features such as heat and moisture tolerance, or cold tolerance, into their seedlings.

Needless to say hybridizers are going to seek new colors and new combinations of colors, not to mention new designs.



Older hybrids, 'Amiguita' and 'Endless'

Where We Are Now.

We are collectively in possession of most of the species in some garden somewhere, though native habitat is disappearing fast into the maw of civilization. Some species' DNA has been preserved in early hybrids involving that species.

Hybridizers have produced flowers so large and wide that the irises resemble petunias. They can be spectacularly beautiful as breeders produce delightful flowers with patterns that are just suggested by their species ancestors. There are enough species and early hybrids available that we can work with the Wildflower Look if we wish.

Thankfully, the work of hybridization is being actively carried on today in many locations.

Past hybridizers attempted to produce more cold-hardy plants, using largely *I. tenax*. These attempts have met with some success. At present, the author is using the possible cold-hardiness of *I. hartwegii australis* toward that goal.



Iris hartwegii australis – Richard Richards

Heat tolerance is also a virtue that some hybridizers are pursuing since heat by itself can be a major problem. When combined with moisture, most PCIs become permanently deciduous. It should be noted that the old favorite, 'Canyon Snow,' survived for five years in Phoenix a decade or two ago. There is potential there for a particularly perverse hybridizer to explore. But then, aren't we all a bit perverse in our attempts to improve on old Ma Nature?

Many irisarians have long been delighted by the appearance of a turquoise flash on the falls of at least three species or subspecies. *I. munzii* shows this tendency strongly.

I have seen it in *I. douglasiana* and *I. hartwegii australis* in much weaker form. Garry Knipe is pursuing the decades-long process of developing a turquoise flower, and has produced some very attractive seedlings, though they are just a step in the process. Garry's work suggests strongly that it can be done.



Iris munzii – Richard Richards

Of course the effort to produce new patterns of color, form, and other features is ongoing. One unfortunate consequence of this effort is that as generations of PCI seedlings are selected in a given climatic environment, the later seedlings are adapted to that environment and will grow grudgingly, if at all, in other environments. This can often be mitigated by introducing irises that are from other climatic environments, but care has to be taken to avoid the production of seedlings that grow beautifully and are selected as parents or introductions because they do well in that climatic niche, but fail in most other areas.

There has been in the past, there is in the present, and hopefully there will be in the future, hybridizers who value hardiness and vigor in a wide range of climates and will breed for it. If this continues to occur, the range of climates in which PCI introductions and seedlings will grow with vigor and hardiness will be expanded, giving pleasure to gardeners and iris lovers the joy of appreciating the unique beauty of the PCI.

Where We Are Going

Obviously, the future can contain an all turquoise PCI flower, though the production of such a flower is a long process and we may not see it in our lifetime. There are soul-satisfying experiences for a hybridizer along the way, and no doubt a tremendous experience of satisfaction as the goal is reached.

PCIs that are reliable for growth and bloom in the colder or the hotter, wetter climates have appeared, but there is plenty of room here for a hybridizer with the idea of progress in that area in mind. Gardeners are reported to have grown pure *I. tenax* plants in the Midwest decades ago. Bob Ward of Little Rock, Arkansas, a few decades ago, produced a hardy and vigorous strain of PCIs in his home garden, with *I. tenax* as a foundation.



Vernon Wood's 1988 introduction 'Mimsey'-photo unattributed ALMANAC

I am sure new patterns of design and color on PCI flowers will continue to emerge. Red in an iris of any kind is a difficult color to produce. Green also. I am also sure that present stock must become more tolerant of difficult climatic conditions if we are to share the beauty of PCIs with people around the world, in what are now difficult conditions. I think the genetic heritage is there. Progress will depend on how many people share these goals and are willing to put pollen to stigmatic lip and spend some time in the creative process of producing better PCIs.



Joe Ghio's 1981 'Simply Wild' --photo unattributed ALMANAC

Kevin Vaughn

I am a late starter at PCNs, having only bloomed seedlings since my move to Oregon in 2010.

In anticipation of the move, I started growing a bunch of seedlings on the windowsill of my office (they wouldn't grow outside in MS!!) from mixed Ghio seed. These traveled west in the back seat of my car and settled in nicely in Oregon. When these bloomed in the spring of 2011, I was hooked. Some of these seedlings have served as the basis of further breeding as several were extremely vigorous and showed no disease problems whereas other named cultivars died out, even in the relatively benign climate of Salem Oregon.



'Raspberry Dazzler' - photo Kathleen Sayce

Some of my first crosses involved some of the seedlings from Emma Elliot, including one named 'Eyecatcher'. Emma's plants are very sturdy and, although they don't have the ruffled form of the Ghio cultivars, they have fairly wide parts. Many of these are bigger plants and have bigger flowers, which I consider a plus too. A cross of 'Eyecatcher' X a Valley Banner-type seedling from Ghio seed gave ~50 seedlings, which range from blue selfs with a suggestion of a deeper spot to more pronounced amoenas and neglectas. The vigor on these seedlings is incredible and they inherited the larger plant and bloom size of the Elliot plant. Many of these have been used in crosses and I should see the first of these seedlings bloom next spring. It will be interesting to see if I recover the Valley Banner types in the next generation.

Because these have such a mixed heredity, I'm hoping that they will be good plants in a number of situations, especially those more marginal for PCN culture.

Another source of interesting flowers has been the plants of Vernon Wood. Almost all of his are very happy growers in my Salem OR garden and the plants appear to be more husky and vigorous than many of the Ghio plants. Genetically they are a bit different too. In crosses with the Wood plants a number of the seedlings have distinctive BLOT signals. My favorite is one in cream with a distinct purple blot. It made its debut at the AIS convention the day my yard was on the pre-tour. This seedling has been used a good bit in crosses the last two seasons, mainly to put these blots into other backgrounds and intensities. These seedlings are MUCH anticipated in the next two springs!



'Sea Admiral' - photo Kathleen Sayce

I also started crosses with 'Sea Admiral' and 'Raspberry Dazzler' to see if the blot signals are also contained within these plants. Another aspect of the seedlings from the Wood plants that I'm trying to exploit are these extremely wide forms with flowers with 3-4" wide falls. So far these have rather tailored petals but the colors are rather interesting. One is nicknamed "Lava Lamp", as the orchid petal color is sort of in swirls, and an extremely vigorous plant. My favorite of these is one with a prominent gold signal, not quite as wide as its sibs, but really showy in the garden.

Two of the Ghio plants have proven themselves especially vigorous here in Oregon, the bright gold 'Going Bananas' and the dark purple 'Night Crossing'. Both were used extensively as parents.



'Going Bananas' - photo Mike Unser

The seedlings from 'Going Bananas' have stayed on the small side and most retain the lovely ruffled form as well. 'Night Crossing' has proven a very interesting parent, giving both some of the best Valley Banner types with incredibly clean white ground colors and some of the nicest dark purple self-colored flowers. A cross of 'Night Crossing' and a root beer colored seedling from mixed Ghio seed gave some lovely shaped odd blends, some like the old TB 'Martel'. Wet weather as they bloomed hampered crossing with them this season.



'Night Crossing' - photo Mike Unser

John Taylor kindly sent opened pollinated seed from some of his selected seedlings. Although the % of germination on this seed was low (I think it is out of sync with our climate), what did germinate and bloom has been lovely. Of these, the nicest is a very clear lavender amoena with impeccable form. It has been used with wretched excess in crosses these last two years! Here in OR the Taylor plants are a bit in between the Ghio plants and the Wood and Elliot plants as far as stature and foliage characteristics.



John Taylor seedling - photo John Taylor



John Taylor seedling- photo John Taylor

Although some people prefer the more species look, I think it is a matter "we've done that, now it's time for something better." PCIs are viewed from above so it's SURFACE AREA OF THE PETAL that is important.

Wide, round and ruffled is what I want. I like the sturdier plants of the Wood and Elliot cultivars and my goal is to get the best flowers on that type of plant. That seems to be an obtainable goal. Debra Gillespie has a seedling with all sorts of buds. My efforts in that direction have netted either poor flowers and/ or stalks that lean too badly. I am really excited about the future of PCIs. Considering how close we still are to the species, I think the sky is the limit

John Taylor, Australia

Our first involvement with iris was with TBs. It didn't take long before we were growing most types of iris including PCI. Apart from crested iris, all of our experience with iris has been with hybrids rather than species. I have never seen true species PCIs in the flesh.

Most other perennials and shrubs we were growing before we got involved with the iris were also hybrids. We were influenced by what had been achieved by human driven 'improvements' via hybridizing in plants like roses, camellias etc.



John Taylor seedling—photo John Taylor

We decided to try to improve the iris in our own small way through hybridizing as others were also doing. In regards to the PCIs, we started basically with 'Hargrave' seed which came from inter-crossing different species of PCI. We have never tried to sort out what species were predominant in these hybrids nor have we gone back to the original species in our breeding.



John Taylor seedling—photo John Taylor

In hybridizing the PCI our primary aim has been to 'improve' flower form which to us has meant fuller, more rounded and more ruffled flowers. This is what interests us but we fully understand that others may prefer the more traditional flower form.

Mary Barrell, New Zealand

In thinking about the future of PCIs, perhaps we should look backwards to the species.

Iris inomminata, small and delicate. *Iris munzii*, very tall. *Iris douglasiana*, medium and with, dare I say this, coarse leaves. In other words variety both in growth and bloom. Why is adding hybrids to the family a problem? Can we not celebrate diversity.?

The tall bearded community can live with species, historic and the latest hybridisations. If they can then surely so can we.



Mary Barrell seedling—photo NZIS

It has been said that some of the new Pacific Iris blooms are becoming too large. There may be a very good argument around this subject as I have found that some of my seedlings have produced a very large flower. In my opinion the objective then is proportion. If that flower has a stem which has the height and diameter to hold the bloom and is in proportion to the foliage then it is acceptable to me. It is certainly not acceptable if it has a short stem or flops to the ground or has a 'goose neck'.

How tall is too tall? One of my seedlings was unusually tall. At a minimum it would have stood at 60cm. It is yellow and velvety maroon with ruffling. Everybody that saw it loved it because it really is stunning. However, its height worried me. Further consideration of it brought me to the conclusion that it stood up straight and tall and was worthy of keeping. Pity it is such a slow grower.



Mary Barrell seedling—photo NZIS

Another feature I have found in my garden is an iris with an unusual bloom pattern. Its first set of bloom comes out all at once and the little plant is totally covered in cerise pink. It fades away after about a week and then a few days later it does it all over again with a second set of bloom. Now is that acceptable? It is stunning in two bursts for a total of about two weeks and is then gone. Every other one of my plants has the bloom coming along hither and thither over a period of time. The bloom season is longer but the effect is not so stunning. Once again I will vote to keep the wee fellow as he has great charm and is a good plant.

To me a good plant should have healthy foliage, clumping habit, with bloom and stem in proportion.

To answer the question of the future for PCIs. My argument would be for diversity –too many rules could become stifling. Nevertheless, I do believe that hybridisers should be selective in the plants they introduce and members should make sure that their plant stalls sell to the public only the best plants .

Emma Elliott, Oregon

In general, I agree that we see both of the types of PCI customers—those who are interested in native flora predictably prefer flower forms and colors that are closer to those found in the wild. Some will only buy species plants but others like the vigor, size and color selection of hybrids with species-like characteristics. This group generally avoids highly stylized ruffled flowers and unusual color combinations.

The second group of customers appreciate the fact that PCIs are derived from native plants but are mainly interested in their pretty flowers. This group represents the majority of our PCI buyers. I am amazed at the wide range of preferences of this group. We certainly have PCIs that are always in high demand but almost all of our colors and forms sell.



Emma Elliott's 'Salsa Picante'

Because of the wide range of customer preferences, we have emphasized garden vigor in our introductions. Our goal is to select plants that will thrive in our Pacific Northwest climate with its winter wet and summer dry. We are less interested in selecting a particular color or form and more interested in an attractive plant with health, vigor and a pretty flower.

We also sell PCIs as established plants in pots rather than as unrooted divisions which increases success rates. Many customers who have had difficulty growing PCIs in the past have experienced good success with our plants.

Garry Knipe, California

The debate over the proper form of PCI flowers has always puzzled me. Not being a botanical purist, I have always felt that there is room in this world for many different flower shapes and sizes. I have used both tailored and wide petal varieties in my own breeding efforts. While the wider formed flowers can present a more eye catching effect in the garden, they sometimes have difficulty opening correctly and don't always have stems strong enough to support the extra weight, especially in wind and rain.

Unfortunately, the best colored flowers have extremely short stems and/or difficulty opening properly due to short perianths and pedicels and long closed spathe valves. I guess it will be a few more years before I get something worthy of introduction.

A few other objectives that simmer on the back burner include extending the bloom season of the PCI and helping to breed and motivate others to breed PCI that grow successfully in more difficult climates. Some of Joe Ghio's early blooming varieties have been very helpful in obtaining long blooming PCI.



One of Garry Knipe's recent turquoise seedlings

For my own breeding, my highest priority objective is to enhance the slight turquoise color that first appeared long ago in Lee Lenz's hybrids between *Iris munzji* and other cultivars. After 16 years, progress has been slow going. Some of my most recent seedlings have shown a little more turquoise color plus I'm getting a much higher percentage of seedlings that are showing at least a bit of turquoise.

And some of the northern growing and high elevation PCI have given offspring that have shown some success at extending the range of the PCI.

Breeding is a fun hobby and I encourage everyone to make a few crosses just to see what comes out or to see if you can push the PCI in a direction you would like to see them go.

Bob Seaman, Seattle, WA

I'm something of an odd character in the iris world. I don't enjoy the comradery that most iris folks share; I enjoy tech and the possibilities it can provide to irisarians. I steadfastly refuse to become a judge; while the standards defined in the Judge's Training manual are of interest for practical reasons, all of the nit-pickyness and politics involved do absolutely nothing to enhance my enjoyment of growing irises.

I think I shocked Will Plotner this spring when he told me I "must" use a couple of branched seedlings in my hybridizing efforts, and I told him that branching wasn't one of the traits I was focused on. I've broken many iris rules over the years, some due to ignorance that gave me results that turned out to be rather eye-opening to other growers, some because they just don't make sense!

I've not been involved in hybridizing discussions with anyone besides Jean Witt. She encouraged my amateur efforts and truly seemed to appreciate some of my results. I'm more interested in seeing the possibilities of what can be produced from my crosses than critically considering specific crosses to gain or remove specific attributes.

Because I have limited space, my focus has been on compact plants and flowers with distinctly different colors and patterns than have been introduced the past several years by Joe Ghio. I'm also considering transplantability.

I think I am making good progress, but in no way, shape or form will I be able to "compete" with the likes of Kevin Vaughn and others with acres to work with.

Paul Wilson, Oregon

My Iris aesthetic has been shaped by two factors: my mother grew TBs on both mid-latitude coasts of North America from the 1940s-80s (the physically smaller iris of that era); and I live in NW Oregon, which is *I tenax* country, with a nod to *I chrysophylla*, a stretch to *I innominata* and *I douglasiana* (and a special grin for *I tenuis*).

I find TBs too large to cut for a vase indoors. Sure; I could grow the smaller bearded iris types. But why, given what lives here? *I setosa* and the siberians are a chronic temptation, which I equally chronically resist, though I've grown both in the past.

I rather like the form and scale of the natives. I find the "Ghio" form peculiar and over-the-top, especially when ruffled. I "get" the concept; I just don't like the look. I like many of the early "spidery" (normal?) British hybrids and many of the *douglasiana* selections.

I usually plant iris in wildland settings, and in combination with the *Brodiaea* group for a sequence of bloom, most often in combination with our native bunchgrasses and other native forbs, to establish meadow openings with substantially native perennial and self-sowing annual plants. My only job, then, is to get rid of weedy invaders and tree seedlings.

In these meadow areas and forest openings I limit shrubs to forest edge and a few naturalistic habitat nodes. Where I have, say, *I innominata* and *I tenax* near one another, I allow natural hybridization, yanking the seriously boring ones (another tan?) and slightly favoring the *innominata* more-or-less evergreen habit. That said, there is sufficient natural variation in *I tenax* (including the 'gormanii' form, whatever its current botanical status is) to give me a substantial set of color variations on the basic theme, with bloom time controlled by degree of shading and soil drainage.

At one time I had a substantial PCI hybrid collection. I've become increasingly nutty about restricting my plantings to natives (granted that this is a tremendously favorable area), but I have very diverse habitat (from S-facing rock - hot and dry in our N Am context - to perennial seeps and most steps in between, with varying exposure). I plant to micro-site and am not shy about borrowing from one or two ecoregions (level IV of our EPA typology) distant.

While the effect may be one of accelerated migration, the thought process is about micro-site adaptation. Once such 'natives' are established (if I have chosen successfully) they simply are easier for an old fart to care for than introduced cultivars.



Iris tenax gormanii—photo Richard Richards

Welcome to the 2016-17 Seed Exchange

Find us online at:

http://www.pacificcoastiris.org/spcni_seedexchange.html

Before placing your order, please read the following information carefully.

There are price changes and new rules for this year's exchange.

Pricing : All seed packets are now priced at \$3.00
Postage and handling for domestic orders is \$5.00
Postage and handling for international orders is \$10.00 for up to 20 packets (please pay for postage 2x if ordering more than 20 packets of seeds).

For Example:

* If you buy 20 packets and it's a domestic order you pay \$65

* If it's an international order of 20 packets you pay \$70

New Rule: Items on the list marked as S (small) or XS (extra small) are limited to 1 packet per variety per order .

Two Easy Ways To Place Your Order:

1. **Online** at http://www.pacificcoastiris.org/spcni_seedexchange.html

Members can view the seed list and photos of pod parents; purchase membership or renewal; place an order online; and pay with PayPal. For our international members, please note that foreign currencies are accepted by PayPal. Once you have completed your order, please forward a copy via email to: seedex@pacificcoastiris.org to ensure we receive a copy immediately (PayPal has been extremely slow to post payments from members who do not have a verified PayPal account).

2. **By Mail** - You can still place your order by mail and pay with a check. Be sure to include the following information:

o Item number, name, and number of packets per type . Having both the item number and name reduces confusion in case I can't read one or the other.

o Your shipping address

o A check made out to SPCNI . (Credit card payment is available only through PayPal, so please don't send me your credit card number)

o Your email address or a phone number. If I can't read something or have a question this helps me resolve things quickly and correctly. If you don't have an email, try to give me a friend's email address.

Optional: You can send me a list of substitutions in case I run out of something. This happens a lot. When this happens, I will make substitutions from your list, give you more of other items you've ordered or send you available items. If you prefer not to receive substitutions, let me know. Your unfillable orders will become a donation to SPCNI.

Please note that we have a large number of varieties that have a small quantity of seeds (S and XS). We anticipate that many of these varieties will sell out quickly, so please limit how many are ordered.

Send your order and payment to.

SPCNI Seed Exchange
c/o Louise Guerin
2200 E Orange Grove Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91104 U.S.A.

Order Deadline : The deadline to place your order is January 31st, 2017. Orders will be filled in the order they are received so get your order in early.

Except as noted in the New Rules note, orders for multiple packets of the same seed lot will be filled, based on availability. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about your order or if your order does not arrive by March 1st for domestic orders and March 15th for international orders.

How To Read The Listings :

This year's seed list is divided into two sections. The first section is **NAMED CULTIVARS** and includes registered and unregistered hybrids, named species selections and their progeny. This is where the complex hybrids are listed.

The second section is **SPECIES AND SPECIES TYPES** and includes both wild-collected and garden-collected seeds of PCI species, natural hybrids and near species plants. Remember that any garden-collected seed in either section is open-pollinated and the listing name is for the pod or seed parent only.

The first column is the listing number and includes the year it is being offered. For example, 110 means listing number 110 from the 2016 seed exchange list.

In the second column you'll see the letters L, M, S, or XS. This refers to the quantity of seeds that we have available. In an effort to share each donation with as many people as possible, the number of seeds included in each packet will be based on the quantity available and the number of orders for that item. (XS packets will contain at least six seeds total.)

The third column includes the description and name of the pod parent or the cross that produced the pod parent. Names within parentheses identify the parentage of a single parent. Descriptions are taken from the AIS Iris registration, if available. **All seeds are open-pollinated unless otherwise noted.**

At the end of the third column, you will find the initials of the seed donor along with the year the seeds were submitted.

Seeds from the same source plants donated in multiple years are grouped in a single listing with donation year indicated. For each year listed within an item, we've listed what size packet would be available if the most current year seeds sell out. Plants grown in different gardens, even though the same species or cultivar, are still listed separately. The freshest seed in each seed lot will be distributed first. **Remember that PCI seeds remain viable for many years.**

A BIG Thank-You to all who donated seeds! Donor participation makes the SPCNI Seed Exchange possible.

Happy growing,

Louise Guerin, Seed Exchange Chair
Email Address: [seedex\[AT\]pacificcoastiris.org](mailto:seedex[AT]pacificcoastiris.org)
(replace [AT] with @)

YOUR HELP NEEDED

The future viability of the SPCNI is linked to the sustainability of the Seed Exchange. Many of our new members join to gain access to the wide range of seeds we can provide for them. This is especially the case for those who garden outside the confines of the West Coast of the United States.

This year's Seed Exchange has only had four donors. We need more members to save seed from their gardens and contribute it to the Exchange so that the Society can continue to provide this essential service to its members.



PCI seedling — photo Gareth Winter

Jean and Joseph Witt photographs — interseries hybrids



'Margot Holmes' is important as the first Cal-Sibe, by Amos Perry; it was awarded the first Dykes Medal by BIS in 1927, and its parents are *I. chrysographes* and a purple-flowered *I. douglasiana*. Photo: Joseph Witt



'Carrie Dawn' is a Cal-Sibe cross between 'Valley Banner' and a Siberian iris. 'Valley Banner' is a hybrid PCI of natural origin, thought to be a combination of *I. tenax* and *I. chrysophylla* with distinctive purple-colored style arms. In 'Carrie Dawn', the purple style arms came through. The Siberian parent is a 40 chromosome iris, no photo is available. Jean Witt describes the Siberian parent as being "one of the dotted plicata-like plants that turn up in advanced generations (F2, F3, etc) of Siberian yellow x blue crosses". Photo: Jean Witt



'Golden Waves' (above) and 'Lyric Laughter' (next page) are sibling Cal-Sibes from the same cross, between a yellow-flowered seedling *I. forrestii* and *I. innominata*. Jean Witt noted that the Siberian parent was a yellow 40 chromosome Siberian seedling, closer in form and color to *I. forrestii* than to *I. wilsonii*. The SIGNA Checklist states that the Siberian parent was *I. wilsonii*; Jean reviewed her notes, and said this is incorrect, it was a *forrestii* seedling. Photo: Jean Witt



'Elvie B. Page' is a Cal-Tosa cross between *I. tenax* ssp. *gormanii* and *I. setosa*. This cross was the result of bee pollination in Elvie's garden, Olympia WA. Photo: Jean Witt



'Crimson Accent' is a Cal-Sibe, and cross between the white-flowered *Iris sanguinea* 'Snow Queen' and yellow-flowered *I. innominata*.

I. sanguinea is known for red bracts, except in this white selection, so it is interesting to see that the bracts are red in the progeny, hence the name 'Crimson Accent.'

Photo: Jean Witt



'Fauxmo' is a Cal-Sibe cross, (a blue-spotted 40 chromosome Siberian X 'Craig's Briarcup', an unregistered PCI selection) X (*I. douglasiana* x unknown).

It has the appearance of *I. missouriensis*, but tolerates dry summers and acid soils of Seattle, WA better than this species, hence the name. Photo: Jean Witt



'Lyric Laughter' (left) and 'Golden Waves' (previous page) are sibling Cal-Sibes from the same cross, between a yellow-flowered seedling *I. forrestii* and *I. innominata*.

Jean Witt noted that the Siberian parent was a yellow 40 chromosome Siberian seedling, closer in form and color to *I. forrestii* than to *I. wilsonii*. The SIGNA Checklist states that the Siberian parent was *I. wilsonii*; Jean reviewed her notes, and said this is incorrect, it was a *forrestii* seedling. Photo: Jean Witt

More recent introductions



Top left- 'Wide Screen,' Ghio 2004 -photo Kathleen Sayce

Top right- 'Devil's Cauldron', Wood 2004 -photo Kathleen Sayce

Middle left -'Drip Drop', Ghio 2000 -photo Kathleen Sayce

Middle right—'Follow the Money', Ghio—photo Monterey Bay Iris Society (MBIS)

Bottom from left, all Ghio introductions, all photographs from MBIS:

'Blue a Fuse', 2015, 'Point Lobos', 2012 and 'Stamp of Approval', 2012.