President’s message

Another primrose season has come and gone. In the Pacific Northwest this year will be known as the year of the auricula.

Auriculas had a high rate of survival last winter in weather that killed or severely damaged many types of primula and other plants. It was the unusual warm weather (in the 70s during the day and 60s at night) between the two severe cold snaps that did the damage.

Many plants were fooled into starting spring growth before the second cold spell, a week of temperatures in the low teens in some places and down to 8 degrees with no snow cover. That was not terribly cold; but with plants in active growth it was too cold.

All the shows were dominated by primulas in the auricula section. The sales tables were well supplied with auriculas, and all types of auriculas sold better than ever before.

At the annual meeting this year a problem in our procedures for the election of officers became evident. As usual a ballot was sent out with the quarterly to allow members to vote even if they were unable to attend the meeting. From over 700 members only 48 ballots were returned; but the majority of members who returned ballots were also at the meeting. Luckily the members present voted to accept the results of the returned ballots avoiding any conflict.

The number of ballots returned makes about one out of 14 members voting. This is not a very good percentage of participation.

Perhaps we should have at least two candidates for each office as well as space for write-in names on the ballot. Maybe then members would feel they have a choice and would vote.

If you have never served on the nominating committee, you do not know how hard it is to get even one responsible person to agree to serve in these volunteer jobs. The APS Board is open to suggestions on how to get more participation in the process of selecting officers.

Our society would be in a bad way without the few dedicated, reliable workers to fall back on in emergencies. Cy and Rita Happy are two reliables who stepped in during the spring emergency and did a splendid job on the spring quarterly.

We finally have a new editor, Richard Critz, who has been seed exchange director. Cy and Rita are helping with the transfer and will be responsible for the summer issue.

This change created the problem of finding a new seed exchange director. Ester (Candy) Strickland has agreed to take that important position. Remember to collect your seed and have it sent to her.

Primrose growers are hard to discourage. After a bad winter we look forward to a better year next time. Instead of cutting down as planned, I have about three times more primula seed planted and coming up than ever before. Granddaughters are coming to help me grow primula. The future looks very bright.

—Herb Dickson
Richard L. Critz, longtime East Coast member of American Primrose Society and last year's seed exchange chairman, will assume the role of editor of *Primroses* with the next issue.

Critz, 62, is a native of Starkville, Miss., and now lives at 1236 Wendover Ave., Rosemont, Penn. With their two children grown, Rich and Carolyn Critz now pursue their horticultural interests — dwarf plants of all kinds, including evergreens, rhododendrons and perennials.

Critz began university study for a career in music composition, interrupted college to serve as a pilot during World War II and returned to graduate from the School of Architecture at Yale University. In 1955 Critz returned to school at the Theological Seminary at Drew University in New Jersey, where he earned the M. Div. degree and was ordained in the United Methodist Church.

He served a year as pastor and then worked as staff architect in the Methodist Department of Architecture until 1968, working both in the home office at Philadelphia and serving in all parts of the country as a consultant to congregations involved in building projects.

He later served as freelance consultant to churches and helped develop a procedure to assist congregations organize and manage building programs. In 1973 he was invited to become editor of "Your Church," an inter-faith bi-monthly magazine with a circulation of 200,000. After serving as editor for four years, Critz has continued his consulting and architectural practice.

Critz has included in his goals as APS editor the desire to retain and improve the quality of the journal, increase contributions and interest of overseas members, work more closely with the seed exchange committee for promotion of that important program, foster greater mutual understanding between East and West Coast primula lovers and "have a huge good time myself" with *Primroses*.

**Florence Bellis receives first service award at national meeting**

**APS creates bronze medal to honor top volunteers**

American Primrose Society membership includes many types of people — the growers and exhibitors of primroses, workers who devote time and energy to the job of keeping the APS and its chapters going and members who enjoy the benefits of the society with a minimum of contribution beyond their dues.

Everyone is needed.

Growers and exhibitors receive ribbons, trophies and hybridizing awards as encouragement and appreciation for their efforts. The society hasn't had a satisfactory award to show appreciation for the many people who devote countless hours to the necessary work of running the society — work that has nothing to do with growing primroses.

To correct this situation, APS has created a bronze medal. It is the "Dorothy Stredicke Dickson Memorial Award for Outstanding Service to the American Primrose Society."

This striking medal will be presented at the annual meeting to living members whom the APS board of directors decides to honor for service to the society. It is hoped this award will become the prestigious award of the society.
Pennsylvania group operates "big business" seed exchange

The seed exchange has become big business. A total of 349 orders for seed were filled by the completion date of April 15, including five orders totaling $150 from one woman participant. Total receipts before deducting expenses were $3,407.31. Nearly 100 orders came from overseas. Donors included 67 persons or firms from 16 countries besides the United States. The exchange offered 249 choices of seed in 19 sections.

Pennsylvania does the job
This was the first year that the Pennsylvania group operated the seed exchange. In June 1983 the committee, led by Richard Critz, acquired a refrigerator and bought envelopes, numbering devices and postage stamps. The chairman wrote more than 750 letters to commercial growers and other possible donors.

Committee work resumed in January to finish packing and numbering in time for the first orders that came in about Jan. 20. Critz said there never was a "big rush, just steady orders day after day."

Seed met most requests
Seed held up well to meet requests. Until the beginning of April, when 95 per cent of the orders were processed, the committee made very few substitutions, Critz said.

Most popular choices included the corythosoides section in general, luteola, rosea Grandiflora, chionantha, and all the verennes, especially the julianas. The faithful committee members, some of whom had never grown primulas before — but do now — met for a garden tour and dinner party. Critz said the seed exchange project "will be long remembered in the Doretta Klaber Chapter as a high spot of service to this wonderful society."

Donations begin in August
Commercial seed was ordered by mid-August, and donations began to come in. The committee began to meet regularly to pack seeds into little envelopes.

Seed began to pour in by late October, slacked off near Thanksgiving and ceased altogether by Dec. 10, when the committee stopped for a holiday break. By that time 50 packages each of more than 200 varieties of seeds had been packed and stored in the bulging refrigerator.

Soviet gift includes primulas
Primula specimens collected in Russia before the Bolshevik Revolution and saved in a Soviet herbarium through the first and second World Wars have been donated to Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

The primulas are part of a collection of 350 plants from the B. L. Komarov Academy of Sciences' Herbarium in Leningrad. They were given to the university in exchange for a collection of Utah flora, said Stanley L. Welsh, curator of the herbarium at the Monte Bean Life Science Museum at BYU.

"This is the first exchange which represents the general flora of the Soviet Union," he said. "We regard this as a valuable addition to the university's plant collection."

The plants, considered important enough to save for more than 80 years, also include various types of thistles, daisies, vetch, clovers and others. They are the voucher specimens upon which the "Flora of Russia," a 30-volume work describing all Russian plant life, is based.

Welsh said he is anxious to exchange research information with primula experts. The BYU collection contains many western primula specimens. Plants at the herbarium are available for study during museum hours from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday and Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.
Gardeners
improve color
in hardy
auriculas

by Herb Dickson

How would you like a strain of brilliant red garden auricula with no shading and no meal in the eye? Or a true baby pink? Or a pure white of good substance?

Some home gardeners and specialty growers have been selecting and crossing to improve the color range and quality and to develop color strains. So far only a yellow and a blue strain of seed give a good percentage within their color range; but red, pink and white are in the mill.

Used to be dull

For long years the garden auricula blossoms have been mainly dull, muddy colors. Garden auriculas have fallen into a catch-all exhibition category — classified by APS as any robust auricula hybrid, not a species, that cannot meet the standards of a show or exhibition alpine auricula.

Show auriculas always have been supreme as a hobby plant for the home gardener.

Auriculas probably never will be a hot item for supermarket sales. It takes a lot of time to develop an attractive saleable plant, and it takes special care to keep it saleable. Unlike the primroses in the vernales section, the auricula has a flower stem which — once wilted — does not stand up again when the plant is watered. The wilted stem simply stiffens in its wilted position.

Possibilities are exciting

The entire color range is getting brighter. Undreamed-of colors, combinations of colors and flower form are showing up. Garden auriculas may never be available as separate color seed strains, but the possibility of a mixture is exciting.

As in any mixed hybrid background seed, growers must cull the duds and select only the best plants to keep and increase. For devotees of double flowers, there is a group of specialists coming up with improvements in the double auricula.

Garden auriculas can withstand extremes of temperature and a wide range of soils. It is clear their popularity will continue to increase.
Good garden perennials easily grown in the open with little attention, pleasing color with plants displaying themselves well, healthy.

We're talking about garden and border auriculas.

Let's clear the air on garden/border auriculas. There is not much point in keeping them too separate — with the possible exception of classes for exhibition at shows.

Briefly, border, with farinose leaves, are supposed to be one solid color, light-eyed with some meal. Gardens, with green leaves, may have some shading in the main petal color, light-eyed with no meal.

**Horticultural hash**

When you buy garden auricula seed, you are buying horticultural hash. Jared Sinclair of Barnhaven Nursery, Brigsteer, Kendel, Westmoreland, England, a noted supplier of plants and seeds, describes his strain of garden auriculas like this:

"The strain was founded on inter-crosses between Old Irish Blue, alpines Mrs. Leonard Hearne, Pink Lady, Gordon Douglas, Thetis and Dusty Millars red, leather and yellow.

"From these unholy alliances the present strain produces large eyeless whites, ivories and yellows with serrated petals; yellows with meaty eyes, self in shades of lavender, purple, plum, blue, red and brown with meaty eyes; shaded slate, sky and violet blues, terra-cotta, crimson and rose; bicolors in pink/plum, pink/red, pink/white, yellow/red and yellow/brown. All are robust growers, rapid of increase and tolerant of inclement weather — in other words, dandy for the garden."

**Getting strong colors**

Sinclair's confession points out a strong
Flourishing garden auricula was potted for show

tendency to use alpines and selfs in order to inject good strong colors into the foundation plant, Old Irish Blue.

My own efforts, 30 years ago, involved putting pollen from a very blue alpine, Searchlight, on a gigantic Old Irish Blue seedling. Some of the muted lavender-blue offspring are with me today.

An ancient group of border auriculas, the Dusty Millers/Millars (I've seen both spellings, but Cox and Taylor in Primulas for Garden and Greenhouse, a scholarly work, prefer Dusty Millar) can still be found. Above white mealed foliage rise umbels of muted colors — pale yellow, golden yellow, wallflower red, crimson or purple.

The petals are notched. Nobody cares. A heady fragrance makes these auriculas totally charming.

Good show, little care

Border and garden auriculas will put on a good showing every spring with minimum care. I recommend they have an annual uprooting, old dirt removed, roots trimmed and decayed portions removed, clumps divided into plants of one to three crowns.

Avoid sour old garden soil. If that's all you have, mix up a sand and leaf mould, add a bit of lime and mix into the auricula bed. The plants will reward you handsomely.

When you replant, be sure the soil reaches a spot just below the base of the leaves. Never let plants look like little palm trees.

Diseases seldom cause these plants much trouble. However, if the leaves on one plant appear mottled and slightly distorted, the plant probably is infected with potato virus type Y, which is transmitted by aphids.

The plant should be removed. If it is valuable, isolate it. Small uninfected offsets may be found under the old leaves, and the offsets can be grown on into healthy plants.
Editor's note: Jack Ballard, a prominent grower and exhibitor in England for some 20 years before his death in 1977, raised many new varieties of auricula. He was the first editor of Argus, the bulletin of the Midland section of the National Auricula and Primula Society, and served as a support to that society.

Ballard was a dedicated grower who "delighted in friendly controversy and was prolific in original ideas," according to Philip Green, who served as secretary of the Midland section. In this issue we have selected excerpts from some of Jack Ballard's articles from a variety of Argus issues. His instructions are timely for modern growers. More than that, we hope you can glimpse something of the man whom many of us loved.

by Jack Ballard

I have always thought that we get nearer to blue with some of our border auriculas that we have so far got with our blue selfs; maybe some Pubescens blood accounts for this. Crossing such blue colored borders with blue selfs is always worth while, for the seedlings, at worst, make excellent pan or border plants, with constitutions like iron and a delicious scent.

The nearest I have come to my watchet blue self with a golden tube was by crossing "Bloxham Blue" with "Windward Blue." The latter came to me as a border auricula, but it had all the appearance of a show auricula, discarded because of its obvious shading from light blue to dark blue.

Some of the seedlings from this cross were especially promising in color of petal and tube but required some slight improvement in paste, which could have been readily obtained by back crossing.

Trying to do too much

Here I must record my biggest mistake in my auricula life — trying to breed winners in every section instead of concentrating on one, or at most, two. There came a time when I had to cease raising any more seedlings and to cull existing stock heavily. Not unnaturally, I tended to keep short term probables in preference to long term possibles, and I am afraid the seedlings just described fell by the wayside . . .

(Ballard described in the article his 20-year effort to hybridize blue auriculas.)

If this article has revived the interest of some older members in the blues, I shall be satisfied. If it persuades one or two newer members to take them up, I shall be delighted.

—Argus No. 22, 1975, p. 43

The late Jack Ballard evaluated crop of new alpine seedlings in his Droitwich, England, coolhouse
Willow earth

Country dwellers will know full well what this is, but there may be those amongst us who are more acquainted with fuller's earth and would welcome some information on this material, especially after the many favorable comments about it in old auricula literature.

Now most decayed timber used at the right stage of decomposition could possibly be incorporated in a compost. The desired type of "willow earth" is something rather more and could well be likened to a growing plant's idea of a digestive biscuit, and the best way of explaining this will be to trace the development of a sample.

There comes a time in the life of many young willow trees when the water supply runs short and the tree has to "draw in its belt," splitting its bark in the process. During the next inevitable rainy spell, the split fills with water, and the tree sends out aerial roots to take advantage. This applies particularly in the case of trees that have been pollarded (top branches cut back to the trunk so tree may produce dense growth of new shoots). Another dry spell causes these roots to die, but they remain in situ.

Cycle repeats

The cycle is repeated with each alternate dry and wet period, and the splits widen each time. The interior wood tends to die and decay, providing additional food and anchorage for the next lot of roots.

Eventually much of the interior of the trunk has a layer of immature willow earth. At this stage it could well be mistaken for a lightly colored sample of coarse peat and could be used accordingly.

Small insects begin to find food and some protection therein; larger insects, birds and small animals follow them, and this further life cycle adds fertility to the marked moisture holding faculty.

More materials collect

Dried leaves, soil particles, etc., are blown in to provide trace elements and still more food. The weight of the growing branches moving in the wind will sooner or later cause the trunk to burst open, allowing more moisture to collect, more roots, more insects, etc., and more to our purpose, the spoils to become more readily available.

At this stage the lower material has been processed and reprocessed until it is as dark in color as really mature leaf mould and very similar in texture. Between these two stages samples can be obtained to suit the most choosy of soil connoisseurs without the necessity of having tins of vintage horse manure.

I have known many trees from which it would have been quite easy to collect several barrow loads. Ironically enough during my first fifty years of life I had access to many "Mallories" but no auriculas. Now I have many auriculas but never seem to have any transport when I come across a nice sample of willow earth.

One great tree

I may perhaps be excused in lengthening this article by recalling a tremendous willow tree growing not so very far from the present home of Arthur Martin. My cocker spaniel would enter a rabbit hole some yards from the trunk, would then be heard scratching his way up the trunk and would eventually bolt rabbits through the decaying bark of apparently healthy branches many feet above the ground.

The cult of growing auriculas and prize gooseberries seems to have been happily associated for centuries, and it is perhaps significant that I have many cherished memories of alfresco meals on delicious fruit gathered from self-set gooseberry bushes growing in the tops of pollarded willow trees and obtaining their obviously correct diet from this self-same willow earth.

—Argus No. 13, 1966, p. 41

Blue self auricula grown from Ballard seed

Timing etcetera

A plant of Wilhampton (an auricula) has been successfully shown in Class No. 1 at the northern show for three consecutive years. Furthermore, it did not open flat until a day or two after the show on each of these occasions. This means that the flowering cycle variation could be measured in days, almost hours, despite the obvious differences in climatic conditions and the vagaries of human attention.

Other cases of this nature could be quoted. . . . Can we learn something from such instances? I propose jotting down a few notes and relative data from my fifteen years of growing auriculas so that other growers may be induced to compare notes, and maybe collectively we can gain some valuable knowledge.

Plants flowered early

When I started, my plants always flowered far too early, even when they were grown in frames before I had built my greenhouse in the 1957-58 winter. This experiment was tried and that one but to no apparent avail.

I believe it was in 1961 that I had a marvelous array of showable plants in early April and was rubbing my hands with glee, for the southern show was scheduled for mid-April. Judge my consternation when the show date was put back because of the late season.

About this time, too, Dr. Newton specially asked me to strive to put on six shows in competition with him in Class No. 1 at the northern show. I had to tell him that my plants were always so forward that I had a job to exhibit one or two plants at Manchester, let alone a six!
Growers scheme for months to ready plants for spring shows

I was always making experiments. I even stooped to refrigeration for varying lengths and at various times, but gradually I ceased to plan and now, looking back with hindsight, I find that just as gradually the proportions of plants available at show time has increased. I even had a growing minority which tend to bloom too late.

What changed cycles?

What has brought about the change? Can it be that certain varieties in certain hands and environments develop the required time-cycle, not unduly disturbed by climatic conditions? I believe in horse racing circles this would be called horses for courses!

Alternatively, by subconsciously propagating from plants that have won for me, I may have conditioned a greater number of varieties into a time cycle which synchronizes flowering time with show time.

In the main, new varieties tend to throw more trusses than older ones, and this gives a raiser-grower a decided advantage... Of course we have those generous varieties which regularly throw one autumn truss and two spring trusses. By growing on half a dozen plants of such a variety, one is virtually assured of a timely truss; but this generosity in flowering is often obtained at the cost of quality, and a collection should not contain a preponderance of this type.

Affecting flowering time

Flowering time cannot depend wholly on light or temperature for, as I write this in a frosty and foggy spell between Christmas and New Years, outdoor plants are carrying roughly the same proportion of flowering trusses as those in raised frames and frost-proof greenhouse.

Summing up, it would seem that selection of varieties that flower at the correct time under one's local conditions (and using such varieties to breed from) may be a very important factor in this matter of timing.

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Fancies and body color

This article has been written with two objects in mind: (a) to encourage sympathetic interest in the "body color other than black" contingent and (b) to find what alternate groups can be channelled into the "fancy" classes to maintain present interest and to ensure future benefit to the auricula.

A list of show auriculas appearing in the "Florist" 1860 shows that of the fifteen edged varieties selected, only three had black body color.

Slater, circa 1862, and Horner 1881 refer to unwarranted preference being given to black. Indeed as "Netherwood's Othello" is listed as a dark self, this preference for black may have extended even to selves in the days that Slater is writing of.

Preference changes by 1962

It would appear that up to 1960 black body colors were on "level pegging" with the other body colors, but by 1962 the preference for blacks was on. From that time onward it can be inferred that a "moderate" edged variety with black body color would win over a better edged variety with any other body color.

It can also be safely inferred that in 1960, as far as breeding was concerned, "black" was a "recessive" characteristic. Since then selective breeding has given black some "dominance" at the cost of well nigh exterminating many of the highly prized colors of former days. (It is quite likely that both selves and edged varieties of the same color spring from the same genetical source.) Oh for a few of the rich blues and bright pinks of Mr. Maddock's days!

At the present time, most of us (myself included) agree that a quality edged show auricula with an intense black body color is...
in a class of its own,” but it has reached this stage after a long period of preferential treatment; and it is asking a lot to expect a better quality edged show auricula with body color other than black to turn up in one generation of seedlings.

Send growers to experiment!

Probably the best way to attain such qualities (and also to bring about improvement in other points too) would be to send twenty or so dedicated growers to twenty desert islands with twenty suitable varieties for twenty years. Then bring them back, appraise their performance and, if necessary, send them back for another twenty years.

With yearly shows and human nature being what it is, some interim methods of providing an occasional pat on the back are vital. ... As I see it, there is, at present, a definite, if only temporary case for restricting green edge, grey edge and white edges to black body colors. (This restriction now exists ipso facto if not ipso jure.)

There is strong support for the withdrawal of the “body colors other than black” from the “fancy” classes. At the present time we have a very limited number of varieties in this category, so that one class under this heading would suffice.

Relief with “fancies”

This leaves us with the “fancy” classes. What is their present role, and what further avenues can we channel into them to maintain the present wide interest in this sphere and to widen the appeal of the auricula in the future? ... Varieties which whilst possessing sufficient character or charm to justify their being shown on their own merit will also provide light relief and added interest to our collections, both at home and on the show bench.

Include striped auriculas

Striped auriculas seem an automatic choice. “Bizarre” varieties could also be included, with pastel shades providing another source and subtle yet distinctive color blends a third.

After all, nature must have provided the origins of the present classes, and the door can be left ajar for further types. “Olive” is a typical example of the charm that can well be obtained from a judicious mixture of pastel shades.

A few years of encouraged experiment and we may well find the next decade of members saying or singing: “Thank you very much for that Bright Pink Fancy. Thank you very much for that Bright Blue Self.” —Argus No. 15, 1968, p. 41

A total of 28 exhibitors brought in 320 entries for the 1984 national show, which was presented by Washington State Primrose Chapter at Tukwila, Wash.

Sweepstakes went to Herb Dickson’s Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery. The APS president also won trophies and awards for best hose-in-hose, best species for a P. reidi var. williamsii, best alpine house for a P. petiolares scapageia, best rarity for P. incarnata, best Primulaceae for a dodecatheon and best companion plant for a Lewisia tweedyi.

Show chairmen Irene Buckles and June Skidmore reported that other show winners included Earl Welch, who won best vulgaris with a bright yellow miniature and best acaulis-poly with a bright yellow; Irene Buckles, best polyanthus for a large orange and yellow; Flip Fenili, best julie hybrid for an 8” pot of J-J and best garden auricula for a bright yellow single.

The Baileys took a variety of awards for their auriculas, including best double auricula for a “super double brown,” best seedling for a green-edge, best alpine for “Goldwin,” best alpine seedling for a purple and best show auricula seedling. They also won best gold lace seedling.

Other winners included Rosetta Jones for best double auricula seedling for a brown; Ross Willingham for brightest garden auricula for a bright rose-red; Al Rapp for best named show auricula for “White Swan” and best oddity for a frosted auricula with reflexed petals.

Best in growers divisions were Howard Larkin for six alpine auricula seedlings and Judith Jones and Vickey Sauer for their floor display. Edna Bailey won best in
juniors with a blue garden auricula, and June Skidmore won best in novice with a P. pubescens alba.

In decorative classes winners included Katherine Brown for a trough featuring miniature polyanths, Orpha Salsman for cut flowers featuring orange and yellow polyanths and Edna Bailey for best decorative junior arrangement of alpine auriculas in a miniature basket.

Theme of the national show was "Primrose Park." The trophy area was decorated as a park scene, adding to the overall look of the show, the officers said. A wide variety of primroses and other perennials were offered for sale. Quality gardening items, books and primrose-decorated items were presented as awards, along with chapter and national trophies.

A total of 13 new members joined APS at the show. The chapter enrolled five additional members.

The banquet held in conjunction with the national show included a business meeting at which the current slate of officers was re-elected for another term.

Florence Bellis was awarded the first Dorothy Stredicke Dickson Memorial Bronze Award for Outstanding Service to the American Primrose Society. Mrs. Bellis was recognized for her work in hybridizing.

Ross and Helen Willingham were awarded a lifetime membership for their significant work as seed exchange chairmen. In accepting the award, Helen made a plea for older members to assist in involving young people in the society, suggesting that youngsters with horticultural hobbies have less time for "less creative activities."

Winner of the exquisite primrose quilt was Bill Morris, husband of the new Valley Hi president, Irene Morris.

Oregon Primrose Society

Oregon Primrose Society held an early show on March 31 and April 1 in Milwaukee, Ore. Show chairman was Etha Tate.

A total of 13 exhibitors benched 152 plants, and plant sales were "very good," according to the chairman. Five persons joined APS at the show.

"We were short on polyanthus entries, but we had a nice variety of plants, including very large species and auricula sections," she said.

Sweepstakes award went to Herb Dickson's Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery. Other winners included Jay and Ann Lunn, best plant in show, and Irene Buckles, best growers exhibit.

Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery took awards for best gold lace polyanthus, best hose-in-hose, best acaulis, best garden auricula, best alpine auricula, best seedling and best greenhouse primula.


Other winners included Irene Buckles, best juliae hybrid; Louise Deines, best novice; Etha Tate, best decorative; Helen Moehnke, best champion plant; Frank Berthold, special award.

Tacoma Chapter

Tacoma Chapter of APS held its show April 7 and 8 at the Tacoma Mall with V. J. (Flip) Fenili as chairman. Sixteen exhibitors benched 324 plants.

For the first time in more than a decade the show was staged in the major mall in the area instead of a bank building in a shopping center. Tables were set in the large main entry, and the chairman reported the "high ceiling, white support columns and excellent lighting made the setting ideal for display of plants."

The mall setting plus extensive publicity resulted in attendance of some 1,500 to 1,800 persons. About 450 plants were sold. The chairman reported brisk selling on the first day of the show, with supplies of denticulatas, auriculas, candelabras, Julies and rosea going rapidly.

Ruth Huston, veteran expert, manned the education table, displaying a full range of sample plants, literature on raising plants from seed and primula culture. Sweepstakes went to Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery. Other trophies were awarded to Fenili for best jack-in-the-green, a vigorous specimen of J-J; Larry Bailey for best polyanthus, a robust plant with yellow flower raised from Park Seed in 1978; Larry Bailey for best show auricula, a dark self called "Nocturne," which was raised by D. R. Newton of England in 1957; and Nelle Cowichan, best acaulis, a large plant with some 10 deep pink blossoms with green centers.

Awards for best in section went to Jim Menzies, best acaulis double; Bailey, best gold laced polyanthus, best species (veranales) and best species auricula; Irene Buckles, best stalked juliae and best group of six plants (uniform purple juliae hybrids); Fenili, best single garden auricula; Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery, best hose-in-hose and best companion plant (Lewisia tweedyi); Rosetta Jones, best garden auricula double; and Edna Bailey, best entry by a junior (garden auricula).

Valley Hi Society

Also held April 7 and 8, the Valley Hi Primrose Society show at Beaverton Mall, Beaverton, Ore., featured eight exhibitors with a total of 75 entries.

Show chairman Ann Lunn reported that awards included the following: sweepstakes, Jay and Ann Lunn; best plant in show, Eileen Trzynka for a blue cowichan; best decorative, Etha Tate.

Award winners included Eileen Trzynka, best polyanthus, the blue cowichan; Helen Moehnke, best jack-in-green for J-J and best acaulis for a yellow; Orval Agee, best juliae hybrid for a large unnamed plant that resembles P. juliae with a lighter flower, best species hybrid for the red pubescens "Eve" and best companion plant for a Lewisia tweedyi.

Al Rapp won best garden auricula for a...
yellow, best double auricula for a yellow double, best hybridizing for a green double auricula grown from green-edge x yellow double auricula and best oddity for a frosted lime-green auricula with recurved petals. Irene Morris won best species for a pink P. sieboldii.

Sweepstakes winners Jay and Ann Lunn also took awards for best show auricula with a yellow self "Sunflower," best seeding for an alpine auricula and best rarity with a P. ellisiae.

Eastside Primula Society

Eastside Primula Society held its show April 20 and 21 at Totem Lake shopping mall at Kirkland, Wash.

Commercial sweepstakes winner was Herb Dickson's Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery with Beth Tait as runner-up. Amateur sweepstakes award went to Florence Tibbotts with Pat Diesen as runner-up.

Claude Brock was winner of the artistic sweepstakes with Rose Brock as runner-up. Novice award was won by Mary Osterday, and miniature winner was Nancy Denney.

Sweepstakes winner for table setting was Charlotte Noble with Dorothy Wold as runner-up. Beth Tait was horticulture sweepstakes with Dorothy Wold as runner-up.

Winning division awards were Beth Tait, best acaulis; Dorothy Wold, best polyanthus, best Garrard and best sieboldii; Pat Diesen, best polyanthus seedling; Herb Dickson, best show auricula, best alpine (Argus) and best garden auricula; Al Smith, best double auricula and best oddity; Mary Baxter, best miniature rock garden; and Florence Tibbotts, best Lewisia.

Doretta Klaber group enjoys spring tour

by Dee Peck

The Doretta Klaber Chapter enjoyed a perfect spring day on May 5 when we traveled to New Jersey to visit Bill and Edith Collins' beautiful garden.

This garden was featured in the Time-Life garden series because of its spectacular bog plants, including a sweep of glorious red Primula japonica. Scores of other bog, woodland and rock garden plants were in full bloom.

I was pleased to discover a large patch of Primula juliana J-J, which made such a beautiful cover for the APS spring quarterly. We found many other treasures, including Helonias buttata, the New Jersey native "swamp pink," which is a fast-disappearing bulbous plant.

Many pine barrens plants had been made to feel at home. There were a patch of Pyxidanthera barbulata, or "pixie moss," in full bloom — a most difficult accomplishment.

However, to me the real eye-grabber was the combination of a fine red Cowichan polyanthus and a shining patch of Asarum canadense (wild ginger), a marvelous combination!

After lunch Dick Critz surprised us all with a gift of three primulas each. We even had several species from which to choose. Regrettfully we left what little was left of the day working in our own gardens.

by Dee Peck

Claire Muller, our Doretta Klaber Chapter president just back from the West Coast, pulled the rabbit out of the hat for the big Philadelphia Flower Show '84.

In her greenhouse she found enough primulas in peak condition to win six awards — one first, two seconds, two thirds and an honorable mention. She also came through in the rock garden classes with a first and two honorable mentions, and she took home a third in the succulent classes.

Blue-ribbon winner

Claire topped off that performance with a blue ribbon Euphorbia platyclada that won a silver award and was named best blue-ribbon winner of the week. Because of her impressive point total, she was largely responsible for the awarding of the Margot Flood Memorial Award to the Rock Garden Society.

There weren't any primula awards left for Lee Raden. He had to be satisfied with four blue ribbon winners in the rock garden and fern classes.

The usual foul weather did its best to slow down and frustrate the intrepid plant lovers working to make the Philadelphia show a greater, splashier, more gorgeous success than ever. Despite the snow and bone-chilling cold, the yearly miracle occurred, and the spectacle was ready when the first of many thousands poured in on opening day in March.

Something for everyone

It is the largest show on the East Coast — probably in the country. However, as a fund-raiser, it must have a broad appeal. It must have something for everyone, and it does.
In contrast, the West Coast APS shows are specialty shows and must be a primula lover’s paradise. Undoubtedly there are more choice, unusual primulas in a single chapter show than are exhibited in the entire Philadelphia show. We don’t have enough keenly competitive growers to have a real primula show.

Another important factor is that few of our excellent growers have any means of forcing plants for the early March extravaganza.

I think all of us who conceive and bring this March show to reality have a right to be proud. It is a dirty, cold and always exhausting job. But it brings pleasure to a multitude who are eager for spring and profound satisfaction to those who labor so long.

Former quarterly editor dies Aug. 13

Alice Towsley Gilman, who served with her late husband, Charles, as editor of the APS quarterly, died Aug. 13, 1984, after a two-and-a-half year struggle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, known as Lou Gehrig’s disease.

The Gilmans formerly lived in Seattle, Wash., where they were active members of the society. After they moved to California, they continued to serve APS and maintain contacts with their horticultural friends.

Mrs. Gilman had recently celebrated her 84th birthday and, according to her niece, Louise Meyer, “took trememdous pleasure in her birthday notes and flowers and other correspondence through the spring and summer.” Although Mrs. Gilman experienced the toll of the increasingly debilitating illness, she was ”without pain, mentally alert, able to make her own health decisions and beautifully cared for by her two nurses,” her niece wrote in a letter to APS president Herb Dickson.

“If she had been able to speak, her last words might well have been ‘Thank all of you for your loving friendship,’ ” her niece concluded.

APS members and friends acknowledge with sorrow the passing of this dedicated and caring member of the society and express appreciation for having known her.

SEED of DOUBLE ACAULIS

NEW SEED CROP IN AUGUST
Minimum Order - 50 seed - $5.00

Rosetta Jones
Phone 852-0330

6214 South 287th Street
Kent, Washington 98031

APS Open Door

Summer is fading away. It’s time to take inventory of our primulas. Send me your list of surplus seedlings and plants, also your list of the elusive ones for your “primrose path.” No list is too large or too small.

Those wishing to participate in the APS Open Door please contact me or direct to those who have already made a request.

Mrs. Virginia Burnett
10071 Lake Dr. S.E.
Salem, OR 97306

WANTED: p. x juliana "Lavender Cloud." Any of the small cushion or p. acaulis forms.

Dr. Charles Nelson
National Botanic Gardens
Glasnevin, Dublin 9, Ireland

WANTED: p. Garryard "Appleblossom." Bronze leaves and a polyanthus type inflorescence with flowers as of an appleblossom-pink in bud unfolding to white.

Dr. Nelson wishes to return this long-lost original Garryard to its home country.

Mr. Josef Kakos
Dvorakova 1316
25801 Vlasim
Czechoslovakia

TRADE: Mr. Kakos has an impressive list of seed to exchange for seed of primulas and rock garden plants. The seed list is too lengthy to reprint, however if you are interested, please send stamp. I will forward you a printout of list.

Mr. and Mrs. Milton Zaitlin
111 Northview Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

WANTED: Pictorial Dictionary of the Genus Primula, published by the American Primrose Society

My door is open. Please come on in.

Harriett Gurney
42 Water Street
Fairfield, Maine 04937
Phone (207) 453-2313
Diary of a Primroser

by Cy Happy

Summer is winding down. Primroses that shed their leaves during the summer heat are cautiously sending up new leaves.

Last winter brought two sharp freezes to Pacific Northwest gardens. Many plants were lost. The tough ones survived. Mother Nature did us a favor by showing us which were the hardy ones. These are the plants that should be propagated and used in breeding programs.

My survivors include all the Garryard hybrids, most of the Juliana hybrids and some of the supermarket pols and primroses. Dwarf jewels had a high casualty rate, but a few of the best came through just fine. A tiny red has been divided many times during the past five years and continues in excellent health. Always watch for the extra-special plant.

Caution for winter care

A word of caution. Never leave primroses to winter outside in pots unless they are sunk in the ground up to their rims or sunk in a sawdust pile. If I were trying to grow primroses in a harsh winter climate, I would try mulching with some of the modern materials, such as fiberglass insulation bats (without paper backing) or furnace filters well pegged down.

Snow is excellent protection if it precedes the first big freeze. As long as the plants are under a blanket of snow, they should be healthy and safe.

We just finished a slide show with music on bugs, butterflies and spiders for the children's gallery of the Tacoma Art Museum. This included insects as depicted by human artists as well as art and architecture created by the insects. Seems as if the subject of insects is vastly larger than when I was in school 20 years ago.

Sign-up time for study weekend

Time to sign up for the 10th Winter Study Weekend on February 22-24 at Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Sponsored by the Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia, the study session will include experts from Europe and North America who will tell of horticultural jewels. Displays and good fellowship abound.

Registrar is Mrs. E. Hobeck, 13751-56A Ave., Surrey, B.C., Canada V3W 1J4, telephone (604) 596-7264. Cost is $27 before December 31 and $35 after — plus accommodations and meals. It's a great way to pump up your enthusiasm. You may also want to plan ahead for the study weekend of 1986, which will be at the elegant Empress Hotel in Victoria, B.C.

Really, it's your fellow gardeners at the study weekends who excite you with new friendships, plants, sources and ideas tailored to your own needs. These are invaluable contacts just waiting for you. There are many primula lovers who attend.

Where is Garryard 'Apple blossom'?

Dr. Nelson in Dublin, Ireland, is collecting old Irish varieties of primroses. See Open Door. He is hoping to find the original Garryard "Apple blossom," whose apple blossom pink polly flowers over bronze foliage may be a thing of the past. However, we are blessed with plenty of Guinivere, which differs but little.

Garryard in its original form carried a gene for de-intensifying color when crossed with a bright colored primrose or polyanthus. The offspring produced pale versions of the colorful parent.

When crossed with a julie hybrid, which normally carries P. juliae's color intensifier gene, the resulting conflict usually produces bright-colored offspring. These are the diluted Garryards which many of us have come to think of as the Garryard strain of primroses — a far cry from the pale flowered, bronze-leaved original.

Sensible Garryard cross

A Garryard (maybe Buckland Cream) with small cream-yellow flowers over bronze foliage appears to be oxlip x Guinivere — a sensible cross most likely to preserve the Garryard qualities. My own cross of white P. vulgaris hybrid x Guinivere produced nothing but white or palest pink extremely hardy plants.

Another request was for Lavender Cloud, a small polyanthus with a bit of bronze in the leaves. Buchart Gardens, a famous showplace in Victoria, British Columbia, uses this plant in their early spring plantings. They acquired Lavender Cloud from England at least 20 years ago. It appears to be a Garryard hybrid having pale flowers, bronze leaves and small, but not miniature, size — just about what one would expect to get from putting Guinivere pollen on a blue poly.

Just got a note from Robert Howard of 2116½ Arapahoe, Boulder, Colorado, 80302, asking for help finding a supplier of the old Munstead strain of polyanthus. He wonders, "Does anyone in the United States carry the seed or plants? Does anyone in the world? Does anyone in the society?" He says Roy Genders says that Carters have an improved selection, but where are the Carters?

Carters were in Llangollen, North Wales. So try Dobie & Son Ltd. at Llangollen, N. Wales, now. Or perhaps a member can send you some seed from the Munstead strain.

Tips on insect pests

Almost every exciting issue of Gardens for All (180 Flynn Ave., Burlington, VT 05401) has an article on interest to primrosers. September 1984 has one on controlling insect pests. The color photos are excellent, clearly identifying spider mite, root gnats and aphids among others.

Had a great one-day trip into the north side of Mount Rainier exploring forest service roads to little known lakes and an old copper mine. Came back with a load of pumice grit — material like coarse sand but sharp and porous. It's a favorite medium for rooting cuttings, starting seeds and adding to potting mix.

Some alpine plants like it plain. It grows small plants with big roots. Some concrete and building supply stores sell it for making light-weight concrete.
Clean-up, put-away time

Looks like it's time to clean out the potting shed. Out with the moldy gloves, rusted sprayers, soggy cardboard boxes. Why, there is Unwins 1981 catalog. Their old reliable Unwins Superb Polyanthus is listed, plus several good primroses, greenhouse and species primulas. Sweet peas — named varieties — and their specialty. Address is P.O. Box 9, Farmingdale, NY 07727 or Histon, Cambridge, England.

Time to tuck the plants into winter quarters. Keep them healthy. Don't overfeed. A little 0-10-10 is all they will want until spring.

Could we have comments from anyone growing primroses in difficult climates by means of an air conditioned greenhouse?