President's Message

It is with much sadness that I report the death of our dear friend, Herb Dickson, known to many of us as Mr. Primrose. Herb was the backbone of the A.P.S. for many years and will be fondly remembered for his enormous contributions to the plant world. On behalf of the A.P.S. I send our condolences to his family. The Fall issue of Primroses will be in his honor.

Continued on Page 25

Herbert H. Dickson
June 27, 1909 – May 16, 1998

Internationally known horticulturist Herb Dickson was president of the American Primrose Society for many years. Known in horticultural circles as "Mr. Primrose", he was honored many times for his outstanding service to the A.P.S. He is survived by three daughters, eleven grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Primroses
Quarterly of the American Primrose Society
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COVER PHOTO
Primula carnioHca, a European alpine primula, is the subject of this issue's Plant Portrait on Page 6.
— Photos by Jay G. Lunn
Growing from the Exchange

By Jay Lunn, Hillsboro, Oregon

The 1997 and 1998 A.P.S. Seed Exchange lists included seed of *Primula kisoana* that Ann and I had donated. This seed was produced as a result of crossing a typical rose colored clone with a white form. Although our 1997 donation included seed from *P. kisoana alba* (thrum) x *P. kisoana* (pin) and the reverse form, the 1998 offering only included the former. From the 1997 seed harvest, we retained from each seed lot an amount equal to about two packets of seed for our own use. For the last several years, we have put our seed donations in individual packages before sending it to the Exchange. Since we believe that the amount of seed included in each package should be generous, that was a fair amount of seed.

Before planting the seed in February of 1997, I reviewed what Norman C. Deno had found in his research of seed germination.1 Dr. Deno concluded that the best germination of *P. kisoana* (50-75% in 2-4 weeks) was achieved by using seed that had been dry stored for six months at either 70°F or 40°F and, after sowing, kept in light at 70°F. His experiments showed that germination failed when fresh seed was sown at 70°F in either light or dark. He mentioned that most growers have a single clone of *P. kisoana* and that no seed is set since clones of this species are self sterile. This is only one of the more than three dozen species of primula seed that he reported on in the first edition of his publication.

Since we had stored our seed in the refrigerator after it had been harvested and cleaned, I deduced that all that was needed was a moderately warm place with light. I have a cutting bench in our garage that I use to root rhododendrons. It has a heat cable in the bottom, polyethylene cover held aloft by wire ribs and florescent lights above. The plastic cover keeps the humidity very high and the thermostat for the heating cable is set at about 68°F, but probably is at least 70°F under the lights.

I noticed that one seed had germinated about ten days after sowing and was growing at an alarming rate for a Primula. I was convinced that a weed seed had somehow gotten into our homemade soilless mix! I resisted the urge to pull it out long enough for the seedling to develop its first true leaf. Once I saw it, I had no doubt about its identity — it was a primula. I was amazed that such a small seed could produce such a large seedling in a relatively short time.

Except for one other weak seedling, this was all of the germination that occurred before I decided that it was time to transplant them both to a larger pot. The weak one didn’t survive the transplanting operation during the second week in March, but the other continued its phenomenal growth. It was planted out into the open garden in late spring and continued to prosper. By March of this year, it produced its first flowers and I was surprised to see that the flower color was the typical rose-pink. I had expected an intermediate color between the two parents.

Our original rose-colored clone did not bloom well this year. Mid-winter weather was very mild here and some plants that would normally have a dormant period didn’t take their usual winter rest. Maybe that contributed to its poor performance. Instead of using it to make crosses for this year’s seed production, I used our new pin-eyed clone.

The daytime temperatures for several days during the last week of April and the first few days of May set all time high records for our area. Cool and rainy weather followed for the remainder of May. Portland normally receives a little more than two inches of precipitation in May, but this year more than 5.5 inches were recorded. Although we are located only 20 miles west of the Portland weather station, we find that our rain gauge collects more than the official amount. In early June, when I examined the progress of my hand pollinating work on the new clone, I was disappointed to find that the crown of the plant had begun to rot off! I suspect that the long period of wet weather contributed to its demise. Fortunately, the original plant had put out rhizomes and produced a half dozen healthy plantlets; however, there won’t be any seed from it for this year’s exchange.

Why grow *P. kisoana* from seed when it’s so easy to propagate vegetatively? Maybe the same reason some people climb mountains — and maybe not. The only thrum we have is the alba form and I had wanted to obtain a rose-colored thrum-eyed *P. kisoana* for hybridizing purposes. A friend had given me a start of one a couple of years ago and it appeared to be doing well, but it didn’t survive the first winter. Another reason may be as Dr. Deno explains as...
Plant Portrait

By Ann Lunn, Hillsboro, Oregon

PRIMULA CARNIOLICA

In a small area north of the Adriatic Sea, near the town of Idrija, Slovenia, resides Primula carniolica. This small member of the Auricula Section is endemic to the area, which for many years after World War II was a part of Yugoslavia. The specific name, carniolica, comes from a Latinized form of Krain, the name of an ancient dukedom in the region around Idrija.

Primula carniolica belongs to the Brevibracteata Subsection of the genus and is thus most closely related to P. latifolia and P. marginata. However, natural hybrids, now called P. x venusta, have only been found with P. auricula because it is the only other species growing in the area. Artificial hybrids with P. allionii (P. 'Ivanell') and P. pedemontana have been produced in cultivation.

The upright leaves are bright, glossy green in color and, at flowering, curl inward. In cold winter areas, the plants are partly deciduous, leaving a small winter resting bud surrounded by a few old leaves. Leaf margins are entire (smooth) or sometimes slightly wavy with tiny teeth found at the tip. The leaf blade gradually tapers at the base to form winged petioles.

One to five fragrant, funnel-shaped flowers in shades of pale rose to lilac, sometimes white, sit atop six to 8-inch stems. The tube of the flower is ringed by a mealy white ring, very similar to the eye of P. marginata.

In its natural habitat, P. carniolica is found around the tops of low altitude (3,000 to 3,500 feet) limestone cliffs in light woodland and pasture settings. Sometimes they are found in the crevices of north-facing rocks. In cultivation, lime is desirable but probably not necessary. They do, however, need more shade than most of the other members of the Auricula Section, particularly from hot afternoon sun. Ample water is needed during the growing season with drier conditions preferred during the winter. A soil that is rich in humus but well-drained is ideal, particularly in areas where winter rains may be a problem.

Primula carniolica is an ideal subject for growing in containers in the alpine house. A well-drained, gritty soil to which some lime has been added will satisfy its cultural requirements. In this situation, a good nutrient supply is essential.

Although it is often difficult to find seed, P. carniolica is easy to germinate and grow on. Alternatively, the plants can be divided after flowering.

If you have it in your garden, please consider saving seed and donating to the APS Seed Exchange, so more people can enjoy its beautiful, old-world charm.

SOURCES:


Growing from the Exchange

Continued from Page 4.

one of his objectives, "... get back enough genetic variation so that seed will again be abundantly set with good viability, particularly since this is one of the most beautiful primulas for eastern U.S. gardens."

Although the seed produced by our plants appeared to be viable from looking at them with a hand lens, I was surprised at the poor germination. I have received P. kisoana seed from other plant society seed exchanges and have not had any success in germinating it. However, it should be noted that most of this seed received our standard treatment — placed outside in mid-winter with only protection from the rain. I encourage those of you who have more than one clone of P. kisoana, especially both morph forms, growing in your garden to take time to hand pollinate your plants and share the results with your fellow members through the A.P.S. Seed Exchange.

In his article "Primulas in Ottawa?", Gerald Taaffe mentions having good germination from P. kisoana for the first time in several tries. He doesn’t reveal the type of treatment he subjects his seed to, but it would be interesting to hear how he achieved his success germinating this species. He also mentions that he had no success with what he believed was A.P.S offered 'Alba' seed. I didn’t find this specifically listed in recent A.P.S seed lists, so maybe he received some of the seed from our crosses. I would be interested in hearing from more members about their experiences in growing plants of this species from seed.

I'm Too Old for This!
By Karen Schellinger, Avon, Minnesota

As I stood surveying my overgrown woodland, I kept telling myself it was too much for this 52-year-old 'creaky'-in-the-morning gardener to tackle! In one area there were one-inch sapling tree trunks and ostrich ferns that had taken over the garden for six years. Large hostas near the front of the border were doing well, but they were too large now and needed to be divided and moved to the center or back of the garden. I had not seen many plants for several years; they tried to live under large hosta leaves and long ago lost the battle.

Such was the state of the woodland garden, where I always seem to get sidetracked away for some reason or another. My sunny perennial beds had been the latest to receive attention, so of course they looked fine, but I could ignore the woodland area no longer. I would come to discover that maintenance is much easier than a major renovation.

INSPIRED BY HOSTAS

Last summer a friend gave me over fifty different three-year-old hostas from his garden — what fun! Hostas are great companion plants and tie any bed together, making it look more unified and complete. 

In the problem woodland area every inch of dirt had to be dug by hand to remove the invasive ostrich fern roots. Each morning when I rolled out of bed to my knees, everything creaked, and the moaning was coming from me!

So I decided to give myself a little incentive and made a trip to Ambergate, a wonderful nursery that belongs to a married couple, friends of mine to whom I sell primroses. They have such unusual and large healthy plants that I had a great time picking out perennials with foliage textures and colors that complemented each other.

Now I had all these pots of neat plants sitting right where I could see them when working on the garden cleanup — my incentive to keep digging away.

Next I purchased some of the Lights Azaleas that were developed for Minnesota — 'Rosy Lights', 'White Lights' and 'Golden Lights'. My aim with the rhododendrons and azaleas was for shrubbery in the center or back to give some height, shape and foliage, with perennials at their feet. Their fall foliage color is beautiful.

I also bought some low creeping evergreens for more texture and to tie the beds together from one end to the other. Russian cypress I love, but you apparently must be very careful about its root drainage. Since I garden under greedy maples, I had no problem there. A ligularia with large maroon leaves and bright gold flowers caught my eye — perfect for the back of the bed, picking up the gold of various hostas planted around.

I tried unusual plants like a Carex variegata with wonderful bold leaves with a darker stripe down the middle of each long leaf, giving an upright arching form. My favorite Carex, 'Gold Fountains', made a mound of the most delightful curly narrow foliage at the base of an interesting rock. Texture and foliage is so important whether in a shade garden or full-sun perennial bed. Often a plant's flowering period is rather short.

One of the most important things in a woodland garden is to have interesting rocks placed around. If you can find some with moss on them, it's even better. Don't try to lift rocks that are too heavy. Backs just don't hold up, no matter how stubborn the German/Polish gardener is! A large scoop shovel works well when you roll the rock into it and drag it to the site. This allows you to place the rocks before you plant.

I really like all the wonderful pulmonarias. Their speckled green and white leaves lighten up an area like no other plant can. Then there's the extra bonus of flowers too. They don't like drought, however, so give them plenty of water.

Another plant with interesting foliage is Filipendula 'Variegata'. The leaves have a good contrast of green and white with creamy flower heads. It also doesn't like to dry out.

Not shade gardens would be complete without the astilbes and I planted many. Choose a selection of different heights, colors, and flowering times to extend their bloom time. They look best if you can plant groupings of the same color, but my budget couldn't afford that so I made do with groups of different colors together. Try to place some white or cream colored ones among the pinks and red; otherwise the darker colors seem to disappear in a shade garden.

Heuchera and heucherella, placed at the front of the beds so they will get good light, give an upright form when blooming and they have bloom stalks for at least a month. The hummingbirds flit from one to the other quite happily.

PRIMULA, STAR OF THE WOODLAND

Now for the star of my woodland as far as I'm concerned — the Primula. All primulas in Minnesota require some winter cover in the form of leaves or some organic matter that won't mat too tightly. A good watering in the fall so that they don't go into the winter dry is advised where the ground freezes like it does in Minnesota. The month of March can be deadly if there's no snow or leaf cover when the ground freezes and thaws each day.

Primulas have done well for me, providing there is enough organic matter.
I'm Too Old for This!, continued

in the soil and plenty of water in the months of June, July, and August. During the other months there seems to be enough water, but there have been fall months where I have needed to water during a dry spell.

The following primulas have survived consistently for me in my garden if I divide them every three years or so: Primula juliae, P. x juliana from Barnhaven and Colegrave seed, Pp. denticulata, polyneura, cortusoides, saxitilis, kisoana, sieboldii, japonica, auricula, and polyanthus from Barnhaven seed. I think the toughest primula is P. sieboldii, because it just goes dormant if it gets dry.

These primulas aren’t as long lived for me if I don’t divide them every three years: Barnhaven aculis seed, double flowered aculis, Pp. farinosa, halleri, candelabra (maybe — I have to try them again thanks to a gift of some seed I received).

Primulas can be divided before they bloom, while they are blooming, or when the have finished blooming. I always remove the woody center stem. I do not move my primulas any later than the end of September and would really rather wait until spring when they are just waking up. In Minnesota they need enough by the dividing! You can even use a wooden shingle pushed into the ground to shade them from the sun if they are wilting too much.

MORE PLANNING

As I finish this article there’s a nice cover of leaves and snow over my plants, and I’m planning how I’m going to redo two other beds that await my shovel and Roundup. As a master gardener friend often says during her talks, “Roundup is the gardener’s friend!” We always laugh at this, but it is true.

Used when the temperatures are at least 65 or 70 degrees Fahrenheit, it works well and saves you a lot of back-breaking work. Some say it works better in the early fall months. I have no opinion on that; I prefer late spring as that’s when I’m cleaning or enlarging beds.

The excitement of trying new plants or seed ever beckons to me and I can hardly wait for spring after the long Minnesota winter. When I finally need a walker to get around, I will just have some make the paths wider!

My grandmother made do by crawling on her hands and knees to put in her vegetable garden. I will need to widen some of my paths to accomplish that as even now my wheelbarrow tends to wander too close to things on the path’s edge. My friends in wheelchairs would appreciate the change, I’m sure.

I then dig it in the area where I’m going to plant or replant the primulas, along with a dusting of bone meal. I top dress the bed with a balanced fertilizer that gets the plants going quickly. And then I water them in well — don’t let the plant dry out, they’ve been stressed enough by the dividing! You can even use a wooden shingle pushed into the ground to shade them from the sun if they are wilting too much.

The double primroses and auriculas created a very colorful display on their section of the show bench. The relatively new micro-propagated double primroses, such as ‘Dawn Ansell’ and ‘Lillian Harvey’ mean that healthy large plants covered with fully-double rose-bud-like blossoms are now found regularly in gardens and on the show benches. The old Barnhaven introduction ‘Miss Indigo’, a deep blue with a silver wire edge, was staged by Tony James, and Jim Hoffman showed a double white auricula, something not seen often.

The show auricula classes were sparsely populated as the season was too early for them, but the green-edged ‘Serenity’ was to be seen. ‘Serenity’ was raised in 1957 by Jack Ballard, an esteemed auricula grower in England through the 1950s and a great friend to APS. Jack reported to Cy Happy, when Cy met him in 1974, that ‘Serenity’ appeared in a batch of Douglas seedlings. It is a tribute to its longevity that it is still grown today, forty years after it was introduced.

Besides ‘Dusty Double’ there were yellow, white, purple, mauve, maroon and blue garden auriculas. Tony James is trying for a good strain of blue garden auriculas and showed a blue seedling raised from Herb Dickson seed that earned him a blue ribbon. Jennifer Lort presented one of the good black garden auriculas strains that is growing strongly here in Victoria. The flowers aren’t really black — just dark, dark red — though they certainly appear black.

Many have a light center, and the contrast is striking. All are strong growers and very garden-worthy.
The Victoria plant is white with a hint of 'Apple P. pubescens' paler than the of articles for the APS quarterly in the but perhaps still more descriptive and entered in the class by Maedythe Martin, to deepen over time. Both plants were shown by Tony James. This plant of 'Apple Blossom' currently grown in England. The Victoria plant is white with a hint of pink, while the British one is almost picotee with a violet-pink edge that seems to deepen over time. Both plants were entered in the class by Maedythe Martin, but the interesting plant in this section was a seedling raised by Hans from the original Victoria plant. This new seedling is a pure clear violet, with very handsome dark purple buds before the flowers unfurl.

The surprise in the primula classes was a white primula on a pale yellow-green stem above small, clear green rounded foliage somewhat like P. rosea leaves — smooth in texture, regular in outline, with no meal. The origin of the seedling, grown by Keith Muir, was known — Scottish Rock Garden Society seed — and though the package was labeled P. rosea, the plant is obviously something else.

The primula judge, Cy Happy, came up with the possibility of P. glandulifera, in the Minutissimae section. It grows in the Himalayan Mountains ranging from Pakistan to Kashmir. These plants are hard to grow in cultivation, as they like the cool, moist alpine crevices of high mountains. The flowers of this plant were clear, crystalline white, with a hint of bright yellow at the eye, and definitely pin eyed. The five petals were marked notched.

Further reading of Richard's book, Primula, and Haldar's The Genus Primula leads me to think it could be in the Aleuritica section, perhaps P. nutans or its close relative P. egaliksensis. These species also grow in bogs or wet grasslands, and, not being long-lived, are most often raised from seed. The white-flowered form is mentioned as occurring naturally.

Whatever the unknown plant is, it won Keith and Suzanne Muir the Watson trophy for best primula in show. What's more, it was undoubtedly the rarest. Let's hope Keith and Suzanne can keep it growing in their cool forest glade.
Primula cusickiana
by Irene Buckles, Tularosa, New Mexico

[Ed.: This article first appeared in the Fall, 1982, issue of Primroses, Vol. 40., No. 4. First printed in black and white, the article is even better in color — enjoy the author’s glorious photos of an elusive native American primula!]

The subject of Primula cusickiana pops up in conversation among primrosers, but only occasionally. Infrequent articles have been written about it and very rarely a photo published. Very few people know anything about this native American primula and many have never heard of either the botanist Cusick or his “Wallowa Primrose” as it has come to be known.

In the beginning, curiosity played the major part in our wanting to find this elusive primula. In fact, we learned of Primula cusickiana from a lecture about this native American primula and joined the American Primrose Society, did we realize how little we knew about primroses and joined the American Primrose Society, did we realize how little we knew about the Wallowa Mountains (before our trip to Hat Point, located in Northeastern Oregon, but it was apparent no one could (or would) describe to us a more specific location. Some said they had found it in meadows hiding in the grass, many mentioned that it grew within the vicinity of Ponderosa pine, while others said it grew on cliffs that you had to hang over in order to even see the plant and still others said the primrose grew on hillides with running water.

Only one road leads to Hat Point and it begins at Imnaha. This 26-mile stretch of extremely rough road runs along the sharp ridge top between the Imnaha River on the west and the Snake River Canyon on the east. When you are looking for a plant never actually seen, this becomes a lot of area to cover.

We found one helpful person, Mrs. Tewinkel of La Grande, Oregon, who had collected P. cusickiana seed. It was late May when she wrote back indicating it would be too late to find the primrose blooming. Starting out anyway in June of 1981, so sure of success, we quickly discovered that Mrs. Tewinkel was right. There had been a very early spring and no traces of P. cusickiana were found.

This last spring [1981] we decided to outwit Mother Nature by starting this search in early May. Unfortunately, it had been a very late spring, and snow fell in the mountains the night before we arrived at Imnaha. Part of the road had been plowed, allowing the journey to continue up the mountain. The farther we went, the higher the snow banks became — finally forcing us to stop where the snowplow has stopped. Fifteen-foot piles of snow were on both sides of the road.

Bound and determined to find the “Wallowa Primrose”, we attempted Hat Point once again on June 16, 1982. Even in mid-June we found a lot of snow. We began going through small patches of snow until finally being stopped by drifts that was impassable. Figuring the vehicle would be able to go through easily enough with a little shoveling, we decided to first walk farther up the road to see how much more snow lay ahead. On the way back to the truck we made a detour to walk along the ridge, looking for plants growing down the bank. About one hundred feet off the road just over the edge of the ridge, we found our treasure! This trip must have been the proverbial third time charm. Here was a large patch of the most gorgeous blue flowers we had ever seen. We knew instantly that this was P. cusickiana even before getting close enough to correctly identify it. The excitement was indescribable — an elation — a joy — that probably only someone who has had a similar experience can understand. After seeing P. cusickiana in nature, we finally understood why people were so reluctant to divulge its location.

Now the real work began — photographing, taking notes, measuring. Most of the flowers were a deep violet blue with a gold-eye, slightly farinose. No white or rose forms were found, and only a couple of pale blue plants. The flowers had four to six petals, mostly five; most petals notched and ribbed, 1.3 to 2 mm. across, with one to seven flowers per scape, mostly three. An interesting observation, both thrum and pin-eyes were found. P. cusickiana has a bright green rosette formed from smooth, nonmealy leaves 1.2 to 1.8 mm. wide and 5 to 8 mm. long. A slight violet fragrance was noticed, but it was not overwhelming. In fact, we had to put our noses right close to the flowers before detecting any odor at all.

Two patches of plants were found growing quite close together, yet they were separate distinct colonies. The first patch was in full bloom on this June 17th, growing on a large southwestern facing rock outcropping. Large evergreens further down the slope provided early morning shade, while other evergreens on the top of the ridge gave late afternoon shade. The entire outcropping was carpeted with moss (Tortula ssp.). Intermingled with the primroses were Erythronium grandiflorum (dog-toothed violet), Rubus ssp. (stick-tight), folioso lichen, sedum and a small growing fern, all indicators of spring wetness and summer dryness. The second patch was facing south, without trees close by, but with a constant stream of water running through the primulas. The P. cusickiana were growing either on top of small rocks or on mounds of soil; keeping the plants high enough so their crowns were out of the water but their roots constantly wet. This colony was almost out of bloom and had started forming seedpods.

The seed capsule itself is very unique with five vertical stripes of pronounced farina (meal). As the seed capsules develop the leaves begin to die down. We collected one seed capsule at this time, after trying to find the one appearing the most mature. As an experiment, the seeds were planted in a pop-bottle terrarium, placing the container in the refrigerator, removing it for a couple of days, and then returning it to the cold. So far none of the seeds in the terrarium have germinated.
Primula cusickiana growing in the Wallowa Mountains of northeastern Oregon.

Three trips were required before this elusive primrose was located.
The plants were in full sun, shaded only growing near any Ponderosa pine, (as P. cusickiana was not found an unlikely combination. Another was found growing amidst the primroses, a collector would be Here, seed here was a challenge, requiring a hundred feet below. The terrain had a more rugged appearance, with the altitude a bit higher. Two other areas certainly didn't have easy access. The terrain had a more rugged appearance, with the altitude a bit higher. The plants were in full sun, shaded only by the overhanging rocks. Collecting seed here was a challenge, requiring a person to lay face down on an overhang while reaching down into the crevices for the seedpods. Here, a collector would be looking straight down to the river several hundred feet below.

_Lewisia columbiana_ var. _wallowensis_ was found growing amidst the primroses, an unlikely combination. Another surprise, _P. cusickiana_ was not found growing near any Ponderosa pine. (as some finders had written about). The few seeds that were collected on this last journey will be planted in December or January in hopes of nature taking over and allowing some seedlings to sprout.

Even after three of these nine-hour drives from Seattle, Washington, to Imnaha, Oregon, in search of the _P. cusickiana_, both in bloom and to collect seed, we did not have enough time to learn many details about the plant. Many more hours of investigation are needed. Observations indicate that _P. cusickiana_ doesn't grow just anywhere in the Wallowas; but where it does grow it usually forms large patches. A soil sample from the first colony tested out at a pH of 5.8.

Further investigation and research on the Wallowa primrose is just the beginning. A challenge would be to find it in the Wallowa foothills in Union County, Oregon, where the species was first located and collected by William Cusick. It is also reported to grow in northern Nevada and in western Idaho. Sources indicate it also grows in the Blue Mountains, which extend into southeastern Washington. It would be exciting to find _P. cusickiana_ at these locations and record differences or similarities with the Oregon plants; also variations in terrain, weather and soil conditions. Being able to grow and flower this lovely primula in cultivation and then entering it in a show would be the ultimate satisfaction.

**THE EDITORIAL DEADLINE FOR THE FALL ISSUE OF PRIMROSES IS SEPTEMBER 1.**

The theme of the Fall issue is "Garden Auriculas". The Fall issue will be dedicated to the memory of Herb Dickson, former A.P.S. president, who passed away in May of this year.

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**Journal Report**

By Mary Frey, Kent, Washington

**BEAUTY FROM ORDER SPRINGS**

The April 1998 _Horticulture _features Frank and Ann Cabot’s sumptuous garden. The piece contains many well-composed and complimentary photos, including the magazine’s front cover. The Cabot’s 20-acre estate, Les Quatre Vents, is settled above the St. Lawrence River near Quebec City. It boasts both formal areas such as a reflection pond and Japanese Pavilions and also sites of wild elegance. Visits to other gardens around the globe influenced several landscape decisions such as the rope suspension bridge seen in the Himalayas and Frank admits “I’m a plagiarist.” The article also highlights Cabot’s 400-plus primula collection that includes _Primula auricula_, _P. capitata_, _P. ioessa_ and _P. wilsonii_. This is a great article fitting for a noble plantman.

**SEEDS OF CHANGE**

Norman & Janet Deno report their studies in seed storage in the Spring 1998 _Rock Garden Quarterly_ of the North American Rock Garden Society. Gardeners traditionally store seeds either at room temperature (70°F) or in the refrigerator (40°F). However, the Denos propose that saving seed in dry storage at below freezing “is probably superior”, although they caution that this research is new and they enlist other gardeners to help in the study. Also, seed storage is dependent on the species and the Denos indicate that each species needs to be tested. For example, they discovered that _Eranthis hyemalis_ seeds require moist, 70°F conditions while _Salix arctica_ seeds need a moist, 40°F state. Finally, seeds with tough seed coats are the longest lived in dry storage; many remain viable for over 100 years.

The Denos conclude their article by asking other gardeners help in this study. Their address is 139 Lenor Drive, State College, PA 16801.

**DIFFICULT WINNERS**

The Show Reports 1997 in the March 1998 _Bulletin of the Alpine Garden Society_ contains several primula winners. _Primula bracteata_ made its debut on the show bench. The plants grow on sheer limestone cliffs in open forests, on the north side of Little Snow Mountain in NW Yunnan. _P. fasciculata_ returns “tenuously” to cultivation after being reintroduced in 1991. These Asian alpines are difficult to grow and maintain but success is possible in “leafy, gritty soil in a semi-shady position”. _P. griffithii x pulchra_, a new cross with deep purple blooms, a small yellow eye and one flower per stem, earned a Certificate of Merit.

**APHIDS AND FUNGUS AND MOLD, OH MY!**

The May 1998 _HORTIDEAS_ reports that the Spring 1998 of _Common Sense Pest Control Quarterly_ not only includes articles about choosing the best disease-resistant rose cultivars but also gives advice about non-toxic fungicides and pesticides. References and mail-order suppliers are listed. For a copy of "Roses continued on Page 21."
A.P.S. National Show, 1998
Bellevue Botanic Garden, Bellevue, Washington

The A.P.S. National Show found a new venue this year, and a very attractive one it was. The hall at the Bellevue Botanic Garden is situated just above the new rock garden, where a number of varieties of alpine and Juliana primula are planted. The magnificent perennial border was filled with blooming old-fashioned polyanthus primroses and Cowichans. Everyone felt right at home.

Best plant in show was a gold-laced polyanthus raised by Maedythe Martin from seed from Lawrence Wigley in England. Of the eighteen seedlings, this plant had the best form, and has now been named 'Beeches Premier'.

Trophy Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trophy</th>
<th>Winner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Etha Tate Trophy</td>
<td>Sally Cadranell</td>
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<tr>
<td>(best acaulis — yellow)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ivanel Agee Trophy</td>
<td>Cy Happy</td>
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<tr>
<td>(best hybrid julie)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rae Berry Trophy</td>
<td>Cy Happy</td>
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<tr>
<td>(best species — Primula atrodentata)</td>
<td>Thea Oakley</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Kerridge Trophy</td>
<td>Maedythe Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>(most flowering species exhibited)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellen Page Haydon Trophy</td>
<td>April Boettger</td>
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<tr>
<td>(best double auricula)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johm Haddock/CF Hill Trophy</td>
<td>Maedythe Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>(best Alpine auricula seedling — a light blue alpine auricula)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capt. Hawkes Trophy</td>
<td>Maedythe Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>(best gold laced polyanthus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ivanel Agee Trophy</td>
<td>John Kerridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(best gold-laced polyanthus seedling)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweepstakes</td>
<td>Thea Oakley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Plant in Show</td>
<td>Maedythe Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>for a gold-laced polyanthus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best in Novice</td>
<td>Jane Mickelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for a double acaulis ‘Sunshine Susie’</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Species in Novice</td>
<td>Miwa Ohta</td>
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<tr>
<td>for P. sieboldii</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Journal Report

Continued from Page 19

Without Pesticides,” send a check for $6.50 to The Bio-Integral Resource Center, P.O. Box 7414, Berkely, CA 94707.

Claire Cockcroft describes her experience with a non-toxic pesticide and fungicide in the June 1998 Northwestern Chapter Newsletter of the North American Rock Garden Society. She reports that Steve Doonan, of Grand Ridge Nursery fame, uses isopropyl alcohol to control aphids and it does not damage plants. Claire added a mist sprayer to a bottle of rubbing alcohol and not only killed aphids but she accidentally sprayed a fungus spot on a polyanthus primrose and fungus disappeared. She then misted an auricula with brown rot, the decay stopped and the plant grew a healthy side rosette. Claire declares, “Beware, aphids and rot! I’m armed.” [I tried also tried the alcohol on rotting basil stems and it does indeed work. M.F.I.

E-mail address: MLFREY@AOL.COM
A.P.S. Plant Registry

By Dorothy Springer, Tacoma, Washington

Would you like to officially name your prized primula plants? Here's how to do it. Send a stamped, self-addressed legal sized envelope for a copy of the registration form to the A.P.S. Plant Registrar:

Dorothy Springer
A.P.S. Plant Registrar
7213 South 15th Street
Tacoma, WA 98465-1501

Be sure to request a form for the type of plant you wish to register: Juliana hybrid, Gold Lace, Auricula, Double primrose, etc.

After you've filled out the form, gather two photos: a color photo showing a close-up of an individual floret and one depicting the overall appearance of the plant in flower. The plant may be shown as it grows in the garden or as a potted plant. Return the completed form, the photos, and a check for the registration fee of $5.00 to the Registrar at the above address.

The A.P.S. Board voted to require a registration fee for official inclusion in the A.P.S. Registry to cover expenses. Those plants that were named prior to April, 1998, are "grandfathered" in and have had the registration fee waived.

Why register your plants? There are several good reasons. Naming a plant, in my opinion, gives it a character, an identity much more personal than just a hybridizing number. The variety will be correctly named and correctly spelled for future growers. It will be recorded as to hybridizer's name! Be sure you really want that particular plant before you name it and make sure you really want that particular name! ♦

Do you have a choice plant, but don't know what to name it? Here are some helpful hints. Plants are often named for family members or friends. They are named for places, streets, or landmarks. They are named for the background of the plant. The Juliana hybrid 'Jay-Jay', for example, is named for the cross that created it — P. juliae crossed with a Jack-in-the-Green. Plants SHOULD NOT be named after another plant. An English auricula grower names his plants after race horses!

One last word of advice — know your plant before you name it and make sure you really want that particular name! ♦

First Things First

By Ilene Burch
Redmond, Washington

A Few Words about a Necessary Evil: The Use of Chemicals

Now, there may be some of you who don't regard chemicals as evil. After all, didn't we grow up with such slogans as "Better living through chemistry"? However, I believe that a lifetime of using pesticides can have a bad ending if the gardener doesn't take precautions. I am hoping that this article will give gardeners some respect for chemicals, and will reduce toxic exposures.

I started out gardening as an "organic" gardener, back at a time when organic gardeners were regarded with a suspicion primarily reserved for streakers and evil Russian agents. When I decided that it was time to grow cantaloupes and watermelons, my dedication faltered as the pests descended. Now I try to use chemicals as little as possible, but I do use them.

Gardeners who wish to avoid all use of garden chemicals will find it difficult to do so when growing primula species. Life will not be denied its opportunity to occur, sometimes alarmingly, on your most treasured plants. For example, the root aphid primarily attacks primulae grown in pots. You have to marvel at the little critters living underground and getting around by who knows what means. I suspect that there are predators of these insects that are active in the ground but for some reason can't live in pots. So it is usually the potted plants that suffer. Alpines in particular are unaccustomed to the humidity of the lower altitudes and its attendant multitudes of pathogens, bacterial and fungal, and — let's not forget — the molluscs.

Two Common Products

I especially want to warn about two products. They pose a particular hazard to the hobbyist because they are so common that they may not receive the care due them. I am not saying that we shouldn't use them, but that we need to be very careful not to breathe the vapors or to get them on our skin.

The first product is an "organic" insecticide made from tobacco — it contains a lot of nicotine. It works well on most pests, but it should only be used by someone who has a respirator and wears all the protective clothing and goggles, etc. This is one example of an "organic" insecticide that may well be more dangerous than the more "ordinary" chemical pesticides.

The second product that we use a lot is chlorine bleach. It is such a familiar chemical that we don't realize how dangerous it is. Chlorine bleach is one of those chemicals that deserves a whole lot more respect that it gets. This stuff is wicked. It goes through skin pretty rapidly and is stored in the body. It has been linked to breast cancer (men get this too!), and it combines with many common substances to form even more dangerous chemicals. If it had been discovered in the 1990's instead of much earlier, it would have a warning label a mile long.

Always wear impermeable gloves when using chlorine bleach. If your skin
First Things First, continued

smells like bleach when you take off the gloves, then they’re not thick enough, or there is a hole in them, or they are not the correct material to stop bleach penetration. Get a different pair!

Bleach solution is also hard to dispose of safely when it is exhausted. I favor pouring it on a patch of lawn and thereby allowing it to biodegrade. Putting bleach down the drain isn’t a good idea at all if you have a septic tank or are connected to the sewer.

Safety Issues

Try to get used to thinking of your skin as a semi-permeable membrane. Lots of stuff can go through it. Other routes of absorption for insecticides are the eyes and even the menses, which have lots of thin skin and a copious blood supply. When you inhale a substance, your lungs absorb it right into your bloodstream. So please be careful! Even if you don’t get sick right away, many of these chemicals have long term effects. I suspect that repeated exposure to bleach is needed before the build up in your system can do harm.

I am not advocating never using chemicals, just be careful with them. Take precautions and don’t overuse them. I think that sometime in the future people will look back on the nonchalant use of chemicals with the same horror I feel when I read about all the mercury, lead, and arsenic that used to be found in patent medicines.

If you are someone who doesn’t worry about bugs and just hires a company to spray your entire yard quarterly, don’t you worry about what that exposure is doing to your body? Remember that in the 1950s people commonly used 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T to control weeds. After the use of “Agent Orange” in Vietnam, people began to realize what chemicals like these could do to humans. Insecticides may affect the nervous system much more efficiently than herbicides.

Better Solutions Needed

What we really need are some less systemic solutions to common problems, such as slugs. We can’t assume that there aren’t some things that would work, but the folks who make slug bait aren’t likely to go looking. I used to buy a product from England called “Fertosan Slug and Snail Powder”, but when the rules about the FDA labeling changed, it became unavailable in the US. According to the label, it was harmful only to slugs, and it was very effective, killing even the eggs. I still hoard about ° of a can of it. The only clue to the ingredients is the mention of aluminum sulfate on the label. Some of the older garden books have suggestions about how to use aluminum sulfate as a slug treatment. Other uses of aluminum sulfate have been as a product to acidify the soil, and as a treatment to “fix” a dye onto wool. While it is an irritant, it is probably less harmful than metaldehyde. Perhaps some bright hobbyist would like to earn fame (and I’m sure fortune) by inventing a better, less toxic, slug control.

I hate to sound like anyone’s mother with all of these warnings, but you people are important. Keeping you healthy is more important than the total elimination of bugs. It is even more important than the total elimination of slugs, without which we would have to hunt for a topic on which to commiserate with gardening friends. So be careful out there! ✪

President’s Message

Continued from Page 2

On a happier note, I am pleased to say that the National Primrose Show/Plant Sale in April was a great success and the Bellevue Botanical Garden proved to be an ideal location. The show and plant sale attracted many people to see a number of well-grown primulas on display and to also buy plants. The weather was kind and in the rock garden and perennial border a number of primroses and primula species were in bloom. Among the trophy winners was Maedylethe Martin from Victoria, Canada, with a fine auricula seedling and Gold-laced polyanthus that was the Best Plant in Show. Cy Happy won the Best in Species with Primula atrodentata, a plant not often seen in cultivation. Each year novices are encouraged to enter plants and this year some new names appeared from the Seattle and Eastside Chapters. It was nice to see a number of out-of-towners coming from as far away as the east coast and Alaska. The banquet on the Saturday evening was well attended. During that occasion Flip and Louise Fenili were awarded the Dorothy S. Dickson Award for their invaluable service to the Society over the past years.

A one-day Primrose Show was held in Tacoma by the local chapter there on the following weekend and proved to be a great success.

With a new APS year starting, I welcome our new officers and look forward to a successful term ahead. My thanks go to all retiring officers but especially to Addaline Robinson, who was Treasurer for six years, and to Jay Lunn, who has provided the membership list and mailing labels so efficiently over the years. Fred Graff has now moved into the position of Treasurer/Membership and hopefully the job will be easier now the treasurer’s records will be ‘computerized’.

The word is still out for a new Editor and some brainstorming sessions are needed and suggestions welcomed. Claire has done a fantastic job over the past couple of years, producing a first-class publication, and the Society thanks her.

Recently Peter Ward and his wife visited Seattle and whilst in the area gave a couple of talk/slide presentations that were most informative and quite well attended. He was particularly interested in meeting Rosetta Jones, Cy Happy and Dorothy Springer, all of whom had been so helpful to his writing his latest book.

With the summer ahead it is time to enjoy the later blooming primulas such as P. florindae and P. capitata. Don’t forget
President's Message, continued

that all primulas get thirsty and need water at this time of the year.

NEW CHAPTER

A.P.S. member Ken Alston, living in Wisconsin, would very much like to start an A.P.S. chapter in the Milwaukee area where people could meet and share plants, seeds, and ideas and discuss various aspects of growing primulas. Ken, a keen grower, joined the society last year and is building up a collection of named auriculas and primulas. He would like to hear from other members in the area with the thought of forming a group. Ken’s address is 5527 W. Ranch Trail, Racine, WI 53402. Tel- 414-681-2740. E-mail: kalston@otcm.com.

ROUND ROBIN

Action in the Round Robin seems to have come to a standstill and needs to be revived. I believe there is interest at home and abroad for members to correspond and share ideas on primulas. Candy Strickland has offered to help get it in motion again. She is contacting past participants and would also like to hear from new members who wish to join in. For details please contact Candy Strickland, 6911-104th St E., Puyallup, Wa 98373. Tel: 253-841-4192.

PROPOSED TRIP TO THE UK '99

I am in the midst of arranging a trip to the UK in April, 1999, for a small group (10 people), to visit a couple of primrose shows, meet members, and visit gardens and nurseries as well as seeing other places of interest. The tentative dates are April 13th - 27th, starting in the city of Bath and ending in the walled city of York. For more information please contact me.

Here’s wishing you happy months ahead.

June Skidmore, Mercer Island, Washington

Want More Primroses?

Back issues of the A.P.S. quarterly, Primroses, are available from the A.P.S. Quarterly Librarian. Prices depend on the issue date:

1996-1997 $3/copy
1991-1995 $1/copy
1990 & before $0.25/copy
A set of quarterlies running from the 1940's through 1990 (a few issues are not available) is priced at $40.

For availability or for ordering copies, please contact

Cheri Fluck
17275 Point Lena Loop Rd.
Juneau, AK 99801-8310
USA

Tel: (907) 789-0595
FAX: (907) 789-2593
E-mail: cheri@ptialaska.net

Garden Auricula Photo Contest!

Deadline to submit photos: August 15!

This notice is the last call for submitting photos for the Garden Auricula Photo Contest. Winning photos and many entry photos will be featured in the next issue of Primroses (Fall, 1998).

I’m pleased to report that many more A.P.S. members have sent their pictures since the last quarterly magazine. But there is plenty of room for more.

Do you have rolls of exposed but undeveloped film sitting around the house? (Don’t we all?) March them down to the corner store, post them through mail order developing, drop them in the discount developer’s collection box — just do it! Don’t feel that you must be a professional photographer (or grower, for that matter) to enter. Pictures of friends’ gardens and public gardens are appropriate. Of course, the most fun is showing off your own garden!

Here — for the last time — is the formal set of rules.

A generous friend of the A.P.S. would like to sponsor a full color edition of Primroses featuring Garden Auriculas, and what better way to get pictures than a photo contest! The photos must be in color, and may be slides, prints, or on PhotoCD™. Photos must depict Primula auricula species and/or hybrids growing in the garden (not in pots), and may feature single plants or groups of plants. $5 will be awarded for each photo accepted for publication. First, second, and third place cash prizes will also be awarded.

Prizes:

1st Prize $25
2nd Prize $20
3rd Prize $15
$5 for each photo accepted for publication

Send your photos to:

Claire Cockcroft
A.P.S. Editor
4805-228th Avenue NE
Redmond, WA 98053-8327
USA

Publication date: Fall, 1998. All prizes will be awarded. All photos will be returned, but the A.P.S. retains reprinting rights at no additional fee.
American Primrose Society Bookstore

**Society Guides** from the National Auricula and Primula Society, Midland and West Section (Great Britain):

- **#8 Primula allionii, Forms and Hybrids**, by Bob Archdale and David Richards, 1997 — $4.00 US, shipping $0.75 US
- **Primroses and Polyanthus, Guide to Species and Hybrids**, by Peter Ward — $35.00 US

Address your orders and inquiries to:
Thea Oakley, American Primrose Society Librarian
3304 288th Ave. NE
Redmond, WA 98053 USA
Thea's E-mail address: othea@halcyon.com

Orders must be prepaid in US dollars by check on a US bank or by international money order, made out to Thea Oakley, A.P.S. Librarian. Postage and handling (unless otherwise noted): in the US add $4 for the first book and $1.50 for each additional book, or outside the US add $6 for the first book and $2.50 for each additional book.

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A Primrose from China

By Maedythe Martin, Victoria, British Columbia

In the 1997 APS Seed Exchange list the third entry is Section Auganthus — who has ever heard of it? It has only one listing — *Primula sinensis*, mix collected Deyiang, Sichuan, China, hardy. The year before, I had seen Nina Sinnott's *Primula sinensis* at the national show in Tacoma, and admired the felted, palmate leaves, covered in red fuzz. Here was a chance to have one of my own plants. I ordered some seed.

Of the four seedlings that emerged, only one made it through our dry summer, but lo and behold, starting in January, the plant began to bloom. The florets are huge, the individual blossoms over an inch across. The color is a clear deep magenta. The overall impression is a bit on the gargantuan side for a primrose, but the plant is still blooming now in late May. That is worth a recommendation in itself.

The seedling did not receive any special treatment, but once the winter rains began in November, I moved it into our glassed-over porch. And I must admit the winter was very mild this year. The test will be a winter with freezing temperatures. However, it is still a privilege to be growing a wild collected primula from China.

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Looking for a New Editor

The A.P.S. is in need of a new editor, starting with the Winter 1999 issue of Primroses. At a minimum, applicants should be able to use word processing software to facilitate electronic publication of the quarterly. Although the current editor performs all pre-press processing prior to publication, this skill level is not required of a new editor.

Anyone interested in this position may contact the current editor, the A.P.S. president, or a member of the A.P.S. Board of Directors. The names and addresses are listed on Pages 2 and 3.

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Yet another primrose grown from the A.P.S. Seed Exchange — a gaudy pink *Primula sinensis* seedling.
Plant Societies

National Auricula and Primula Society
Invites all auricula and primula lovers to join in this old society. Membership includes yearbook.

Northern Section
D.G. Hadfield
146 Queens Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire, England.

Midland and West Section
Peter Ward
6 Lawson Close, Saltford, Bristol, England BS18 1BG.

Southern Section
Lawrence E. Wigley
67 Warnham Court Road, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey, England SM5 3ND.

The New Zealand Alpine Garden Society
invites you to join other overseas members enjoying the benefits of our Society. Two informative Bulletins each year and an extensive NZ native section in our seed list enhance the contact with New Zealand alpine plant lovers. Enquiries to the Membership Secretary or join by sending the equivalent of NZ$25 payable to NZAGS (Inc.). Visa/Mastercard facilities available.

New Zealand Alpine Garden Society,
PO Box 2984, Christchurch, New Zealand.

North American Rock Garden Society
Join Today!
Benefits of Membership Include: Beautiful, Colorful Quarterly Bulletin; Seed Exchange offering Thousands of Plant Species (including many primulas) at Low Prices; Spectacular National Meetings; Opportunity to Meet Gardeners
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Officers of the Chapters

Alaska Group
President, Ed Buyarski
P.O. Box 33077
Juneau AK 99803-33077
buyarski@alaska.net

Doretta Klaber Chapter
President, Dot Plyler
18 Bridle Path
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
Tel: (610) 459-3969

Valley Hi Chapter
President, Addaline Robinson
41809 S.W. Burgarsky Rd.
Gaston, OR 97119-9047
Tel: (503) 985-1048

Tacoma Chapter
Co-President Candy Strickland
6911 - 104th St. E.
Puyallup, WA 98373
Tel: (253) 841-4192
Co-President Cy Happy III
11617 Gravelly Lk Dr
Tacoma, WA 98499
(253) 588-2585

Washington State Chapter
President, Rosetta Jones
E. 170 Dunoon Pl.
Shelton, WA 98584
Tel: (360) 426-7913

Seattle Chapter
President, June Skidmore
6730 W. Mercer Way
Mercer Island, WA 98040
Tel: (206) 232-5766

Eastside Chapter
President, Thea Oakley
3304 288th Ave. NE
Redmond, WA 98053
Tel: (425) 880-6177

British Columbia Primrose Group
President, John Kerridge
4660 10th Ave. W. #1102
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6R 2J6
Tel: (604) 224-7813

New Zealand Alpine Garden Society, PO Box 2984, Christchurch, New Zealand.

APS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

EDITOR
Claire Cockcroft
4805-228th Ave. N.E.
Redmond, WA 98053
Tel: (425) 868-6788
E-mail: ccrft@halcyon.com

ROUND ROBIN
Edward Davis
226 E. High Street
Hillsboro, OR 97123

SEED EXCHANGE
Pat Wilson
9621 Kelly Ct.
Juneau, AK 99801

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Cheri Fluck
17275 Point Lena Loop Rd.
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Tel: (907) 789-6595
FAX: (907) 789-2593
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LIBRARIAN
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APS HOME PAGE
http://www.eskimo.com/~mcalpin/aps.html

BACK COVER PHOTOS
The winning plant at the 1998 A.P.S. National Show in Bellevue, Washington, was a visitor from across the border — Maedythe Martin’s fine Gold-Laced Polyanthus.
— Photos by Maedythe Martin