Primroses

Summer 2003
Greetings folks, its summertime in Alaska, why would anyone want to live anywhere else? We’re having great primrose growing weather, the fish are biting and a few of our local politicians are even listening to us! With the help of Vivian Meyers, a Juneau Garden Club and APS member and myself, the Juneau City Assembly recently passed a resolution naming primroses the Official City Flower. See a copy of the resolution in this Quarterly. Unfortunately, they would not unilaterally declare Juneau the Primrose Capital of Alaska so now we have to lobby our State Legislature for that designation. The Juneau APS Chapter will assist and encourage planting of primroses in more of our public spaces.

Do read about our very successful National Show in this issue; many thanks are due to our Judges and all the people who worked so hard before, during, and after the Show to bring it all together. Unfortunately, Duane Buell was not able to attend the Show as he passed away this spring. He will be missed as he was an active Juneau member and brought the APS website into the 21st Century. Thankfully, Pam Eveleigh is carrying on and improving his work.

Speaking of Shows, the 2004 National Show appears to be heading to Victoria, BC and more details will be coming from Maedythe Martin as she works with her group. We will want to look for reservations to visit her fair city next April. All of you need to be closely watching your plants to see if seeds are ripening so you can harvest and dry them at the right time for the APS Seed Exchange.

I just received a copy of John Richard’s new edition of “Primula”. There are new photos and some very interesting conclusions on relationships resulting from recent DNA analysis of leaf material of many species. I won’t give away the plot other than to say some taxonomic surprises and changes are likely coming.
especially as more species are analyzed. A review in the next Quarterly will tell you more about the book if you can wait that long. Unfortunately he misspelled my name (twice); I must speak to him about that! I'm looking forward to more detailed reading of it this fall when the gardens are put to bed.

From the Editor

Our summer issue brings our annual show reports. A welcomed addition to the traditional show reports this issue is the New England Chapter's first "get-together". A big Thank You to all the Chapter's members for a wonderful report and gorgeous photos to accompany it.

In the past Primroses has had Regional Editors to ensure all of our reader's interests as well geography is represented in our publication. Once again we are going to attempt to recruit Regional Editors from around the country. Please consider volunteering for your area. You do not have to be a technical writer or photographer. What we are looking for is someone in each region of the country to look for basic "how to" articles from members in their area, gardens or nurseries that may be of interest to Primrose readers, news from other Societies or Garden Clubs that relate to Primula, or just a desire to be involved in putting together the highest quality Primroses we can. Write to me, call me toll free at 800-926-5097, or email me to answer any questions you may have about becoming a volunteer Regional Editor. We could also use some help in advertising, both soliciting new ads and invoicing for your area.

New England Primula Show
by Judy Sellers

A few of those who remember the last Primula Show in New England, over a decade ago, came to see the most recent one, at Berkshire Botanical Garden in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, on May 10. Other visitors, including the exhibitors, had never attended a Primula Show east of the Rockies.

Our Show was an informal affair, a practice exercise which provided fun and experience for all. The primary goal was to put as many species and hybrids of Primula plants as possible on the tables in order to encourage Primula growing in the North East. The secondary goal was to gain a bit of experience with organizing a Show and benching plants.

Eight enthusiastic exhibitors provided over a hundred plants, giving viewers a realistic look at what they might grow in their own gardens. Most sections of our experimental Show Schedule were represented.

Elaine Malloy, as Show Chairperson, and Mary Irwin, Chapter Co-President, were responsible for making a vague idea, suggested at a Chapter meeting a year ago, into a reality. We all had a lot to learn about coordinating and publicizing the event, cleaning clay pots, and hoping that our plants would bloom for "The Day". Chapter members came from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and New Hampshire to set up on Friday before a congenial mini-banquet at a local restaurant, and a few more arrived on a warm and sunny Saturday morning.

Judging presented some special challenges, because we did not have APS judges available. It was decided to have viewers score the plants in each Section, and vote for the Best Plant in the Show. Special ballots were distributed, along with APS and New England Chapter information and a two page ‘Primula Primer,’ as people entered the display room.

Our site was the airy front room of the old homestead, in the middle of the Botanical Garden. Our date had been selected to coincide with the Botanical Garden's annual plant sale as we hoped shoppers might happen to drop in to see what Primula were before going home. The strategy seemed to work, as we had approximately two hundred people visit during the day. We could not hold a plant sale, which would compete with the Garden's, but the book and Quarterly sale and silent auction helped defray the show expenses.

A fairly large group of polyanthus and acaulis Primula were on the first bench. At the corner, 'Guinevere' attracted attention with its delicate pink flowers contrasting with the dark bronze leaves. A dark red, velvet textured, acaulis with the characteristic Cowichan leaves came next. Among several hose-in-hose plants were a delicate yellow polyanthus and a wire edged bright red. Jack-in-the-greens were well represented, with coral, pink, and the old favorite, 'Dawn Ansel' offering variety in colors. The double acaulis section included ‘Sunshine Susie’, a small red flowered primrose with bright green leaves, a striking coral-peach combination, and a soft pink in a pale round clay pot.

The polyanthus section had several large plants, showing healthy foliage and an abundance of flowers. Especially notable was a tall plant with red and gold flowers. Here the blues became evident, with a clear mauve polyanthus and a blue and white striped one. The only plain single acaulis in the Division was a blue one, which some viewers compared to an African violet, as the many flowers were nestled in the middle of a well balanced rosette of leaves.

Eight plants filled the Juliae Division: stalked, acaulis, and a combination of forms on the same plant, ranging from yellow through light red to darkest red and the characteristic Juliae purples.

The auricula section included many...
good colors and some very nice plants, though getting auricula to provide a full truss for the show date had been a problem for most exhibitors. The public didn't seem to mind the scarcity of pips, as many had not previously seen any auricula flowers, and these looked just fine. Questions about hardiness, growing conditions and sources indicated an interest in growing these plants, and we hope to see more at future shows. Among the best was the oldest named plant in the show, 'Argus.' Examples of border, alpine, self, grey edged, semi-double, and double auriculas were admired and scored on ballots. The unusual beige/purple coloring of 'Sirius' pips caused several comments, and one lady rubbed the petals of the grey edged seedling between her thumb and finger to see if it was real!

The lone plant of Gold Laced Polyanthus had plenty of flowers, of quite good lacing, but lacked stems of sufficient height to get the blossoms above the foliage. Still, viewers recognized and appreciated that this was a plant with a different character.

The Novice Division included a good variety of plants, but was small, as some exhibitors chose to place their plants in their specific divisions, as viewing them that way provided more information to the public about the various Primula species and hybrids.

Among the species, a very floriferous P. farinosa, benchy by a novice, was a pleasure to see. P. kisoana (pink, pale pink, and alba forms) sieboldii, cortusa, the last of the denticulata for this year, several unidentified, but sweetly scented pubescens hybrids, and one P. albocincta (which we agreed had a fragrance somewhere between citrus and skunk) demonstrated the huge variety within the genus. The veris clan was represented in many forms. There were plain yellows, interesting reds, oranges, hose-in-hose, and wire edged. All were well grown plants, causing difficulty for the judging public.

The seedlings on the bench proved that some unique and lovely plants can be grown from seeds obtained through the seed exchanges. A semi-double rich pink acaulis had an amazing number of flowers from a single crown.

The two entries in the Greenhouse Primula Division confused visitors who had just been advised that Primulas are 'bone hardy' and will survive a New England winter. A large bicolor white and lavender P. obconica and a gorgeous fluffy P. forbesii of the same color tones necessitated explanations about non-hardy Primula.

The last table held four plants hybridized by the exhibitor, one six plant pan of Juliae hybrids, a charming arrangement of P. veris in a ‘frog’ rain gauge, an androsace with miniature leaves and pale mauve tissue thin flowers, and a wide variety of P. marginata plants, past their blooming time, exhibited for their foliage and farina.

As we watched conscientious people slowly work their way around the tables, marking their ballots and commenting among themselves about the plants, we thought that many were looking more carefully at each plant than would have been the case if judging had been completed previously and results displayed. We had not anticipated much participation in our judging experiment, and were a bit daunted by the amount of math and length of time needed to tally about a hundred very complex ballots. Our four volunteers persevered with pencils and paper, calculators and soft drinks until almost closing time, when they triumphantly presented a fine list of winners.

The public showed a preference for blue flowers, as the bright blue acaulis took Best of Show, but it was a close contest, with many other plants receiving votes for that distinction, and taking blue ribbons.

Our first experience of putting on a show was hard work, and we were certainly tired by the end of an exciting day, but we all went home with ribbons for our plants, enthusiasm for our next show, and an appreciation of the friendship of fellow Primula enthusiasts.
which won third, was for me the most interesting plant in this class. It had large pips, at least 3 cm across, which were a beautiful blend of green and russet stripes with a well-defined circle of clear white paste. The edges of the flowers were a little ragged, but this is a problem of striped auriculas which hybridizers such as Maedythe are still trying to breed out. Note that fancy and striped auriculas are given their own class in the shows of the American Primrose Society and the National Auricula and Primula Society of England. Perhaps stripes were lumped in with show auriculas owing to the general scarcity of auricula entries.

Alpine Auricula
Maedythe's “Argus”, with five wide-open pips and more to come, won first prize. Though a very vigorous old variety, “Argus” seems to have a tendency to produce flowers with hexagonal centres in certain years, and quite perfect flowers in others. Second prize went to Maedythe’s “John Kerridge Blue”.

Hybrid Auricula
This class includes P. pubescens and similar hybrids. Maedythe won again with “Lismore Yellow” (Many books classify this as a hybrid allionii, but it is an allionii x auricula cross, so it’s entry is justifiable here). Second prize went to P. x pubescens “Boothman's Variety”. The P. X pubescens “Roemer’s Form”, which took third place, had one large scape of seven thrum-eyed flowers, all equally open. They were the largest flowers I have ever seen on a pubescens.

Species and Garden (Border) Auriculas
There was only one entry in each class, which was a pity.

Marginata
Maedythe wasn’t going to bring her “Linda Pope”, but needed an extra pot to pad out the tray of her show plants for transportation. The flowers opened in the warmth of the car during the long journey, and the plant turned out to be the most floriferous of all her entries, with, of course, the freshest flowers! It won first prize. Second prize went to a lovely little dwarf colony of marginata entered by Ian Penderleith, President of the B.C. Alpine Garden Club, and a member of the BC Primula Group.

Species Allionii and Allionii Hybrids
Ruby Chong took first and second place with her “Broadwell Milkmaid” (white thrum flowers) and “Hemswell Blush”. Third prize was Maedythe Martin’s “Mars”.

Double Primula
(All sections)
In the double primula, Ruby Chong’s “Dawn Ansell” won a first prize. “Dawn Ansell” is a vigorous double which frequently wins this class. A seedling double yellow from Peter Ward’s seed also won a blue ribbon. Second was a semi-double striped auricula called “Country Maid” (another Maedythe original). The stripes were mauve and white, the growth compact. The leaves showed some farina. An “April Rose” was covered with thirty or forty buds, but unfortunately it had only one flower open (Perhaps judicious use of grow lights would have brought it on in time for the show!).

Section Primula
Ruby Chong won first prize with a P. sibirbiorpii cultivar called “Spring Time”, which had luminous pink-purple shading and a small, yellow pin centre. There were some lovely large cowslips, and a very interesting vulgaris hybrid which may have had some “Garryard” blood - a lemon-yellow pin flower with dark pink pedicels and some bronze colour in the leaves. It filled a ten-inch pot which was entered by Ruth Anderson.

Primula Juliana
Ruby Chong entered a beautiful example of “Jay-Jay” in the juliana class. It was difficult to see the fine leaves for the abundance of the rich, purple-red flowers. Maedythe Martin’s julie called “Kay” was interesting for its yellow-eyed, near-blue thrum flowers.

Garden Hybrid Polyanthus and Primroses
The most spectacular entry was a large pot labelled “Garryard Alba” with pin flowers. However, I know of no such name, and the plant looked very much like “Early Girl”. Does “Early Girl” have pin flowers? A lovely specimen, whatever. Ruby Chong entered a laced-edged hose-in-hose (flowers seemingly growing from inside other flowers) and lace-edged jack-in-the-green (flowers with a green ruff behind them).

Section Oreophlomis
There was a huge pot of “Johanna”, entered by Ian Penderleith. This is a cross between P. warsenewsianka and P. clarkei, but looks nothing like either parent, resembling P. rosea, for which it is often mistaken. The foliage was immaculate, and the plant was covered with flowers. One or two pips showed signs of fading, which is to be expected with such a mass of flowers. Ian’s plant won second prize. First was a P. rosea (See “Best Primula in Show” below).

Section Aleuritia
Only one P. farinosa (first prize) and one P. frondosa (second prize) were entered. The P. frondosa was interesting for the dark pink of its flowers.

Section Denticulata
The blue ribbon was won by a lovely grouping of purple P. denticulata, which demonstrated various stages of flowering. There were at least ten stems in a relatively small pot. A white entry received a red ribbon probably because it was less well-centred in its pot. Both were entered by Ruby Chong.

Section Cortusoides
This was won by a white P. kisoana seedling with a lovely circular head of at least seven open flowers. Next to it was a pot of P. sieboldii “Shi-un” which had only two flowers open at the time of judging, though the leaves were
perfect. Both plants were entered by Ruby, who is a member of Paul Held's Sakurasoh Society.

Best Gold-Laced Polyanthus
Ruby Chong's silver-laced poly (pin-flowered) won. In fact, there was only one proper gold-laced polyanthus (thrum-flowered) in the show, which won nothing. Many entries labelled"gold-laced" had lacing which did not reach the center of the flower, and which should therefore more properly be called "lace-edged". This is a class which has been somewhat neglected by local competitors and judges in recent years. I hope that the APS committee currently working on show standards will introduce tighter rules which will help to remedy this failing.

Best Primula in Show
The prize went to a well-developed clump of what was labelled "P. rosea", but was probably "Johanna". The two are difficult to tell apart. In any case, the plant was in peak condition: the leaves were very fresh, the stems strong and upright, and the flowers still young, without signs of fading.

Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Society Show
April 4 - 5, 2003, Victoria, B.C.
by Maedythe Martin

There are 12 primula classes in the only major spring gardening show on Vancouver Island where one can enter primula. This year there were 102 entries in these classes — a very good representation of the genus. The Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine show is an alpine plant show, so there are always as many species primula and primula suitable for the rock garden as garden hybrids. The season was late this year, after a promising start, as well as the show being early in the month, so more Primula marginata and Vernales primroses appeared than auriculas.

The European primula section had some fine plants. Growers seem to have had their plants for some years, now, for they are big plants. I know the care some of these are given by the devoted owners. The results pay off. The winner, a fine specimen of P. marginata species, showed the toothed leaves and beautiful meal so typical of this plant, but care had been taken not to water over the top of the plant so the meal was positively thick on each rather small, toothed leaf. The owner had to be coaxed to bring the plant to the show, and then won a first. The news brought a number of friends to the show later to admire. I expect we might see more entries from this proud owner in future.

The North American hybrids of P. marginata were well represented.

‘Jimmy Long’ makes a fine large plant in a relatively short time, and it was interesting to note how surprisingly pink the flowers are compared to other marginata. ‘Agee’ was covered in the gold meal it is noted for, and the flower of this variety is thrum with an open-face, rather than the bell-shape of other varieties. The modern blues that April Boettger has introduced to the market, from Herb Dickson’s stock, are always impressive and this year there was a superb large plant of ‘Allan Jones’. It is so blue! Perhaps this plant had been grown outdoors in a very bright spot for the color to be so deep and the leaves so luxuriant.

The queen of the section, ‘Linda Pope’, such an excellent show plant, sat in splendor, covered with bloom. The large round flowers are an immediate identifier for this winner, which has always as many species primula and primula suitable for the rock garden as garden hybrids. The season was late this year, after a promising start, as well as the show being early in the month, so more Primula marginata and Vernales primroses appeared than auriculas.

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American Primrose Society - Summer 2003

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American Primrose Society - Summer 2003
flower, a more modest white *P. kisoana* and *P. saxatilis*, which has been in cultivation for over 100 years. With delicate pink upright flowers, the plant shows the characteristic fuzzy leaves of this subsection. Some leaves are broader, almost maple-leaf shaped, but all are hairy. It is great to see entries in this class.

There were huge pots in the Vernales class, now called Section Primula. Giant pots, some 12 inches across appeared with cheerful garden classics — the yellow acaulis and the white acaulis. The cousin to this plant, *P. veris*, the cowslip, was presented in the traditional yellow, in an orange variant, and in dark red. The plant with orange flowers had a dot of white or pale yellow in the center of each petal. Is this vestigial lacing? In another three pan entry of *P. veris* there were two rust colored flowers and a red-flowered plant. One of the rusts had an actual stripe down each petal — the dot had grown to a line! Is this the gene that results in the stripe on the petals of flower such as 'Kinlough Beauty'? *Primula vulgaris* was also represented in many double forms. One little plant had buff-apricot flowers. 'Marie Crousse', an old double variety believed to be of French origin, is such a good garden plant it should be more widely grown. The magenta-lavender flowers have splashes of white over the flowers and around the edges of the petals. Tony James, here in Victoria, has grown it for some years now, and divides and divides it. 'Freckles', another double primrose, also has white dots of color on the edges of the petals. And finally there was one lovely dark magenta with a wire-edge. The white edge contrasted beautifully with the dark petal ground color.

In the Juliana class the prizewinner was a fine specimen of 'Lady Greer'. This plant was covered in pale yellow stalked flowers, set off by the fresh green calyces. It is pin-eyed, and a very pretty spring plant. One entry, named *P. x pruhoniciana* (the accepted name for Julianas, though I prefer to call them Julianas, even if it is outdated) 'Ostergruss' This is similar to the familiar 'Wanda', but with dark magenta thrum flowers on longer, more elegant stems. The Pacific Northwest 'Jay-Jay', a great garden plant, appeared in two entries. One had much longer flower stems. Could this be from growing in a more sheltered area? Microclimates and soil content can make such a difference in appearance in the same plant.

The Polyanthus class brought us some Garryards to admire. The most frequently seen plant, 'Garryard Guinevere' has such a handsome leaf. The dark green is suffused with red or dark rose to give a bronze effect. Top this with crushed strawberry pin-eyed flowers and you get a pretty picture. The flowers seem to have rather long pedicels, giving an airy effect. Another Garryard with white flowers was covered in buds, not quite out. This again was a pin flower, but the contrast with the bronze foliage and white flowers is very attractive.

But the most stunning plants were some dusky polyanthus brought in by Sue Lee. The flowers are dark purple-red with a clean white wire-edge for very good effect. Sue had saved seed from the mother plant and also showed three seedlings. The variation was interesting. The wire-edge gene came true, for all three plants but in slightly different ways. The first was magenta, with a white edge. The second was purple, with dots, not lines on the edge of the petal. The third was the most striking with dark maroon, almost black flowers with the bright white wire-edge again. I hope more of these striking plants will continue to appear in future shows.

The winning polyanthus was the same plant as last year, a dusky rose color, now called 'Violet May'. It is proving to be a vigorous clone, and a number of fortunate growers in the area now have pieces. A laced polyanthus in an orange-yellow color with a yellow edge named 'Sunshine' brightened up the bench. The flowers darken with age, providing more contrast with the gold edge.

Tony James is a very successful polyanthus grower, and didn’t disappoint us this year. His 'Striped Victorians' were in very good form. Three were presented in different shades of blue. The first was ink blue stripes on a pale background, the second a softer violet-blue and the last a mid sky-blue. These are from Barnhaven seed, and are surely one of the most striking color forms of the polyanthus.

The Cowichan primroses originated in the area, just up-Island, and it is fitting that they appear in the local show. The classic dark red flowers with no eye are very dramatic. There were two this time, one pin and one thrum. Another form of red, brighter, with a hint of yellow at the center of the flower provided a contrast.

The garden auricula class had many entries with plants of very good size. Colors ranged from dark purple through magenta to pale violet. There was even a pale straw color. One double yellow brightened the bench. A dark red, almost black seedling was like the 'Old Dusty Miller'. Maedythe Martin had some striped seedlings — the breeding program continues.

In the three pan class the entry with three yellows showed the different forms the flowers could take. Some are bell shaped, some open with a flat flower face. The first prize here was a splendid yellow-flowered plant, with flower faces flat, and a bit of meal in the center. The accompanying entries were gray and violet. You have to admit the color range in auriculas is so varied it will suit the most discerning taste. Maedythe Martin also showed three double green seedlings. These appear like small green roses. Very odd.

Taking second prize, an entry with three auriculas included the odd bronze-rust-brown color that the Victorian called "hair colored". I do have a partiality for this shade, especially when it is set off with a white eye. Nice to have a reminder of past ages. And a purple garden auricula with a white eye was a nostalgic reminder for the author of the first auricula she ever grew. One can’t write about auriculas without thinking of the wonderful perfume. Just open a frame full of auriculas in spring.
Tacoma 2003 Primrose Show
by Candy Strickland

The Tacoma Primrose Society held its 53rd Primrose Show, April 10th thru the 13th, in the Centennial Tent at the Western Washington Fair Grounds. Our setting was beautiful, flanked on one side by over 500 gorgeous Rhododendron trusses and on the other side by our lush and much sought-after sale plants. As usual we were undecided until the tables were all set up as to what the show was going to be like. Warm blooming weather early in March, then a cold April with wet conditions early and then a severe hailstorm just three days before the show, but all went well. We had a total of seven exhibitors and benched 129 plants.

One plant that we all had to guard with our lives was Roger Eichman’s magenta P. denticulata. It was absolutely gorgeous and was the talk of the show. Thankfully it was on the Award’s table so we could keep an eagle eye on it. Warm blooming weather early in March, then a cold April with wet conditions early and then a severe hailstorm just three days before the show, but all went well. We had a total of seven exhibitors and benched 129 plants.

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The best Primula in show was P. forrestii, a devil to grow, and handsomely no mean feat. It completed a wide range of plants, from species to garden hybrids, which pleased and delighted the many show-goers.

American Primrose Society
2004 National Show
Victoria, B.C.
4th Weekend of April, 2004

More Info Coming!
spaces and the donated room was quite large. The room had ample space for the Juneau Primrose chapter’s annual plant sale fundraiser, space to host the show benches, and seminar seating. In addition, the large area allowed for two other garden groups, the Juneau Garden Club and the Juneau Master Gardeners, to hold their annual plant sales. Given Juneau’s penchant for quick weather changes all of us — were grateful to be inside, although the sunny weather that the judges brought with them held throughout the weekend. Opening morning saw 200 people lined up to buy plants from the three groups.

The Juneau Chapter held its annual show simultaneously with the National Show and given Juneau’s wonderful spring the room was awash with all the local primrose species in every color. After the judging took place, a small intimate luncheon for the judges, clerks and show chairman was held in the back of the show arena. Saturday afternoon two seminars were held adjacent to the show arena. The first seminar was by Ann Lunn of Hillsboro, OR, with the assistance of Ed Buyarski, on plant propagation. The second was given by Dorothy Springer from Tacoma, WA, on primula Juliae. Both seminars had respectable showings given the glorious day outside.

Given that Juneau was experiencing the sunniest, most pleasant spring in over a decade exhibitors were somewhat apprehensive that the bloom would be over by the third week of May, our usual bloom time. Mother Nature was nice and provided perfect show weather.

There were fifteen divisions in this year’s Show, put together to reflect the plants most likely to be benched, as well as the time of year. There were a total of 111 entries for the show, down from previous shows, but still a respectable showing. Of the 111 benched plants, 53 were awarded an initial blue ribbon, 22 were awarded a red ribbon, 16 white ribbons, 3 plants were not judged, and 17 plants were marked “Display.” Many of the display plants were benched from the late Duane Buell’s greenhouse.
New England Show Top: Devon Creme X Beige seedling Judy Sellers photo

Bottom: Polyanthus 'Guinevere' Mary Irwin photo

New England Show Top: Varigated sport 'Doris' Candy Judy Sellers photo

Bottom: Barnhaven double seedling Judy Sellers photo
New England Show Left: Border Auricula Right: P. farinosa Mary Irwin photos

Bottom: New England Show ‘Back in the Car’ Judy Sellers photo

New England Show Top: Fancy Seedling Judy Sellers photo

Bottom: Laced Hose-in-Hose Judy Sellers photo
Left: Vancouver Show ‘Mist’ Right: ‘Gleeni’ bred by James Douglas shown at the Victoria show, both grown and photos by Maedythe Martin. Bottom: The very impressive, very blue P. marginata ‘Allan Jones’ in Victoria, Maedythe Martin photo.

Photos by Maedythe Martin for article page 32.
Tacoma Show Left: Thea Oakley Border Auricula  Right: Roger Eichman's Jack-in-the Green
Ed Buyarski photos
Tacoma Show Bottom: 'Best in Show' Julie Hybrid grown by Cy Happy III
Juneau Show Left: Best Cowichan Ed Buyarski’s Red Cowichan RT photo Right: Duane Buells Shalford double shown by Ed Buyarski RT photo
Juneau Show Bottom: Best Julie Ed Buyarski’s Julie Hybrid ‘Early Girl’ RT photo

Juneau Show: Paul Dick’s Border Auricula awarded the Juneau Chapter’s new Duane Buell Memorial Trophy for Best Garden Auricula. Pam Finney photo
Bottom: John O’Brien Sr. looking over the benches Marion Simpson photo
The most popular division was species, with a total of 31 pots. It becomes obvious walking through the benches that species do very well in Southeast Alaska, as there were 21 blue ribbons awarded in this division. A look on the bench would find first-class examples *P. veris* (both yellow and red forms), *elatior*, *sinopurpurea* from the China expedition, *rosea*, *denticulata*, *secundiflora*, *rusbyi*, *scotica*, species *juliae*, *cuniefolia* (grown and over wintered from local seed, a first!) and *chungensis*, as well as a host of others. But in the end the judges were wooed by a pot of *P. saxatilis* grown by Cheri Fluck. She was awarded the division as well as the Rae Berry Species Trophy, and the Juneau Chapter Best Species Award.

Next in number on the bench were the *juliae* hybrids with 25 pots exhibited. The judges awarded 9 blue ribbons, 7 red and 8 white. The showstopper in this division was a pot of "Early Girl" benched by President Ed Buyarski. Ed was awarded Best in Division, the Ivanel Agee Best Hybrid Julie Trophy at the National level, and the Juneau Chapter Best Julie Award.

The Auricula Division was represented with 18 entries. Paul Dick took the division with a purple garden auricula of exceptional quality. Paul was also the first recipient of the Juneau Chapter's Duane Buell Memorial Award for Best Garden Auricula. In the same division Robert Tonkin was awarded Best of Show with a pot of the auricula hybrid 'Harlow Carr'. There were 7 blue ribbons awarded, 4 red and 2 white. The auricula division also saw the most 'Display Only' exhibits, most of them from both Duane Buell and Rosetta Jones, this year's show Guest of Honor.

Polyanthus were few at 7 pots, but what was there were beautiful. The early spring probably had the most to do with such a light showing in the division. Ed Buyarski once again proved his skills by benching a near perfect red Cowichan, winning him the John Kerridge Memorial Trophy for best Cowichan, as well as Best in Division. Ed Buyarski was also the proud winner of the Sweepstakes Award for most points won in the show.

Other Juneau Chapter awards included Cheri Fluck awarded Best Vernales with a pot of species *juliae*, Best Polyanthus awarded to Ed Buyarski, and Robert Tonkin awarded the John O'Brien Best Denticulata Trophy.

Our Novice Award is a bit of a misnomer this year. After decades of
RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU,
ALASKA
Serial No. 2174

A Resolution Establishing the Primrose as the Official Flower
of the City and Borough of Juneau.

Whereas, the primrose has been in cultivation for at least 500 years. And
Whereas, Juneau is the site of Chapter and National Shows of the American
Primrose Society, and
Whereas, as depicted in the above reproduction of Temple of Flora Auriculas
( Robert Thornton, 1805) the primrose can flourish in shaded, and rocky locales
while others grow in bogs and woodlands, all typical of Juneau, and
Whereas, primrose gardening in Juneau is a popular and rewarding activity that
benefits our community and brightens the spirit of the gardener and each passerby,
and
Whereas, Juneau was the site of the 2000 and 2003 American Primrose Society
National Show, and
Whereas, the Juneau Garden Club, Master Gardeners, and American Primrose
Society support this resolution, and
Whereas, gardening tourism is a growing segment of the tourism market, and
Whereas, Juneau members of the Society have been generous with their time and
talent, as evidenced by their 1999 planting of 250 plants in the courtyard of the
Capitol Building, and
Whereas, it is appropriate that the primrose and its enthusiasts be honored and
celebrated:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY
AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA:

Section 1. The primrose is declared to be the official flower of the City and
Borough of Juneau.

Section 2. The City and Borough encourages the planting of primroses
throughout the Borough.

Section 3. The City and Borough of Juneau respectfully requests that the State

Section 4. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon
adoption.

Adopted this 23rd day of 2003

Sally Smith, Mayor
It seemed Duane was new to Primula and I was new to computers, so we struck a deal that he would teach me about computers and the internet and I would teach him about growing and showing Primula, especially Auricula. Soon we were exchanging emails every day and several times some days, about primulas and just about anything else you could think of.

I got an email from Duane early in September 1999, which said he had set up a Primula discussion group on the Internet and would help me run it. I said yes, but in truth I didn’t think it would ever come to anything. How wrong can you get. Now the group has over 200 members all over the world, experienced growers and novices all helping each other to understand primula better. To give, and to get, help and information to grow types they had failed with in the past or new varieties. Plants, seed, books, photographs and all manner of things began to be passed from member to member and new “Twinning” partnerships were formed between the American and UK Societies. Exchange visits, friendships, on line chat groups and many other activities began to happen as a result of Duane’s foresight.

I used to get wonderful photo attachments from Duane with his emails; he loved to take his cameras into the wild of Alaska and photograph wildlife and wild flowers. I never knew what picture I would receive next; bears, eagles, owls, glaciers, or wild flowers. I enjoyed seeing them all as much as Duane enjoyed photographing them and sending them to me.

When he had to go to Seattle for a few months for treatment, he took a laptop computer with him so I still received emails from him most days to tell me what he had been doing and places he was visiting in Seattle. Knowing that I had a passion for ships, especially old sailing ships, he would go down to the harbour and take shots of ships, anything from old sailing ships to super tankers, and then email them to me as attachments.

Duane was the Webmaster for the APS. He also took over the Twinning Program when a new coordinator was needed. Quite simply he had a knack for being there when you needed help. He will be missed by all who knew him. I am sure of this. He was simply the nicest, kindest man you would ever wish to meet.

Duane and I exchanged seed and plants over the years and as I write this I have Fritillaria camschatcensis in bloom here as a result of bulbs Duane sent me some years ago, and Iris setosa too. They are a wonderful reminder of the friend I sadly never met, but miss terribly. My sincere condolences go to his wife, Susan, and his whole family.

Terry Mitchell

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2003 Seed Exchange Report

The time has come again to prepare for the annual seed exchange. This is a popular service: last winter we received well over 200 requests, and distributed 6900 packets of seeds. Demand was high for primula rarely offered in recent years or were offered for the first time, and the old standard favorites were still best sellers. The most sought after item was a ‘Gold Laced Jack-in-the-Green’ donated by Marie Skonberg. (65 requesters), followed by double polyanthus, anomalous primroses, double auriculas, black self auricula, striped auricula, and juliana ‘Fireflies’. There were a few items for which the demand far exceeded the supply (i.e. at least twice as many requesters than available packets): P. nutans, allionii x, marginata, dryadifolia, angustifolia, boveana, etc...

To all of you who saved and sent seeds last year, a big Thank You! You made the exchange possible. We hope that this year again you will be able to contribute generously. We need your support. We appeal to all the others: please watch these seed pods, gather seeds when they are just ripe and send some to us. It is for a good cause.

Advice for donors:

1. What to send: primula only. Please send CLEAN seeds in good sealed envelopes properly labeled. Identification should include the species of course, the color (if there are several possible colors); a name if the seeds come from a named form or hybrid (please add the section since the name may be new or not well known); location if collected in the wild; and the indication “HP” if the seeds resulted from hand pollination.

2. Where to send seeds: The rules established last year by the USDA are still in force. To enter the USA legally seeds must be accompanied by a suitable phytosanitary certificate. Two APS members have generously offered to obtain such certificates and will be our collecting agents. Canadian donors please send seeds to: Ruby Chong, 6870 Union Street, Burnaby, (BC) V5B 1X5, Canada. UK and European donors please send to: Richard Austin, 10 Forestside Gardens, Poulnar, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 1SZ, UK. Donors from the USA, please send to: APS, c/o J. Mommens, P.O. Box 67, Millwood, NY 10546.

3. When to send seeds: Ideally regional collectors should have received the seed by October 31, 2003. Please keep in mind that the obtaining of certificates is done in one single operation, not as seeds are trickling down. Therefore seeds arriving after October 31st will not be offered in this 2003-2004 seed exchange.

If you have questions about these procedures and the seed exchange, please send them to J. Mommens, P.O. Box 67, Millwood NY 10546, email: mommens@advinc.com.

Thanks in advance for your seed contributions!
Gremlins in the Garden
by Maedythe Martin

When you hybridize auriculas, there are always surprises. Since 1995 I have had striped auriculas of various sorts blooming as seedlings. Each spring brings new excitement. The last three years a number of odd double auriculas have shown up. Since I started with 'Dusty Double' — a lavender and green semi-double stripe, it is clear where the doubling comes from. The new colors are a bit of a mystery.

The odd double greens I have been getting arrived from who knows where. The freshness of the green is appealing, to me at least. These lack the dark ground color seen of green shows seen in the English double green called 'Sword'. And they are not at all formally organized like the 'Old Double Green' described by Miss Wynne in Ireland in the 1960s. You might say they have pointed ears like pixies.

The first striped double to appear was a lavender and cream called 'Country Maid'. The 'Dusty Double' heritage is there to see. In fact, 'Dusty Double' itself was hybridized from pollen from the old Irish striped auricula 'Mrs. Dargan' that was grown at the turn of the century.

This year brought two more surprises. A semi-double striped orange, called 'Tropical Sunset' is an eye-catcher. It has some similarity to Derek Parsons' single striped orange or gold auriculas which may be reminiscent of 'Brindles' grown in the 1780s and described by Emmerton.

The second oddity came by way of Allan Hawkes' seed, or so the label said. The first batch of seed from Allan gave me some lovely rose auriculas — single and double — but no stripes. But this yellow-green flushed red double, called 'Gremlin' is a seedling of the rose single. No one needs to tell you the genes in hybrid auriculas are sophisticatedly scrambled once you've seen this auricula.

The final oddity is a double white-edged, called 'Snowball'. I trust it will cover itself in bloom another year to get the full effect. The petals are dusted over with white farina, both dust and stripes of meal on a green petal ground. There are flashes of red in there, too. The label on this one says it is a cross of an old Douglas grey-edged with a seedling grey I raised four or five years ago. You just never know! But you can imagine spring next year will be a time of high excitement with more seedlings to bloom. (photos on page 21)

The freshness of the green is appealing, to me at least. These lack the dark ground color seen of green shows seen in the English double green called 'Sword'. And they are not at all formally organized like the 'Old Double Green' described by Miss Wynne in Ireland in the 1960s. You might say they have pointed ears like pixies.

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Supermarket Primroses
by Maedythe Martin

A new and an especially attractive strain of primroses has shown up in nurseries and supermarkets in the last couple of years. They never seem to have labels, but someone has seen a name on the flats from the growers — 'Rosies'.

The flowers are smaller and more delicate than some of the commercial strains we've seen in the last decade. The colors are interesting — often they are white with a pink picotee edge, or peach or even blue. The blue one I have is quite a deep shade, with tiny white dots along the edge of the petas. The petals often tend to be ruffled, the overall effect is dainty and old-fashioned.

Reading Peter Ward's book, Primroses and Polyanthus, I find mention of new strains of commercial primroses mention from Floranova. Peter notes that Floranova, founded in 1978, is a "relatively new British company based at Foxley in East Anglia." It has "already established a reputation for innovation in bedding and pot plant breeding," and at the time of writing the book, Peter notes, "they have number of projects underway exploring more innovative ideas." Could the 'Rosies' be one of these new ideas?

One friend has wintered over some plants through two seasons, now, so there is some hope they may be longer lived that some of the strains bred as pot-plants. If anyone has more information I would be very interested to know about this appealing little strain.

Digital cameras and digital photography can be confusing at first, but with a modest investment and a small amount of learning you can easily join the digital revolution. I spent a good deal of time searching through the trade magazines and reading web pages dedicated to reviews of various cameras. I did this after I sat down and honestly...
asked what I would be using the camera for. I will share with you readers what I have learned from going through this process. I’m sure other experienced photographers will have different opinions to match their needs and budgets.

I narrowed the criteria I needed to focus on for my purchasing decision to the following: 1. What size “megapixel” camera should I own? 2. The type of physical memory device the camera would use. 3. The use of the pictures I would be taking. 4. Ease of use over fancy features. 5. Battery type. 6. Not emptying the savings account. You may have others, these were mine.

The “megapixel” issue was solved by the intended use. I came to understand the larger the number of megapixels, the larger picture I could print, or have printed, in the very best quality. Larger quality pictures for printing would mean buying a camera with a larger megapixel capacity, and would also require larger storage "cards" to go in the camera to hold more of those pictures. I learned of the “digital trade off”: the higher quality of the pictures, the less would fit on a single memory card.

I knew that most likely the pictures that I would be printing (notice I use the word printing rather than viewing on the computer screen, two different uses entirely!) would be about 5 inches wide by 3.5 inches tall, or a half page size for the garden with your camera full of your plants and garden, and want to see the results of your efforts. Once downloaded onto your computer using the supplied software and cable, you see all these great pictures. You are impressed with the quality of the photo on the screen. Good job you say. This digital stuff is great. Most likely you are looking at a picture at 72 dpi at 18 by 22 inches wide, custom made to fill your computer screen and give you that instant gratification of a job well done! Now let’s take the process a few steps further and try to understand what we have in that digital picture newly downloaded.

Learn to become familiar with the size and quality of your pictures right from the start. It’s not that hard. This involves becoming familiar with the image editing software that came with your camera, or learning to use some of the other full featured storage, archiving, and image editing programs available for purchase. Learn where to find this information in the software menus and learn to understand what the numbers mean! This same software will also allow you to change the image size in dots per inch (DPI) as well as the physical size of the picture at the same time, easily. This is a task you are going to want to learn how to do. Many will also allow you to add a "key-word" to the photo file to help find the picture later, a blessing after 300 or so pictures. They all come with instruction manuals, take a bit of time to read yours!

If you decide not to read it though, remember Rule of Thumb #1: You should always attempt to reduce a picture’s DPI setting rather than enlarge it with your software. Yes, this means you should take the original picture at the higher resolutions your camera allows for. Let me repeat this. It is always better to have a picture with MORE dots per inch than you need for its intended use. Storage is cheap, and getting cheaper by the day, but coming up with needed missing pixel information to enlarge that magic picture and retain quality for printing is impossible! Software can compress (remove pixels) from a picture with no loss of quality. The quality problems arise when you have a picture that does not have enough pixels (DPI’s) from the original shot (camera was set to lower resolutions) and you attempt to enlarge it physically (dimensions) or quality wise (DPI). When attempting this, the image editing software “guesses” to fill in the color of the requested dots per inch to enlarge your picture. The software manufacturer proudly calls this “up sampling gee-wizz snazzy algorithmic processing”, but it really means guessing. This “guessing” most always degrades the quality of the picture significantly.

Of course the more original dots per inch you have in a shot the larger the file is, so keep the “digital trade off” issue discussed earlier in the article in mind. Going up resolution settings of your camera creates pictures with more dots per inch. If you want a photo that you believe may eventually be used by an offset press (printer) at 5 by 3 inches (Primroses), I would suggest using “AT LEAST” the “1600 x 1200 Fine Resolution” setting of most cameras (do the math, 1600 divided by 300 DPI is 5.33 inches). If you wish only to have them saved on your computer or printed on a home color printer, then many settings below this will work, depending on the quality of your printer. If you think you may ever have a professional picture made larger than 5 by 3 inches, I would take pictures with your camera set to “2400 x 1800 Fine”. For pictures that may end up being VERY large, or that once in years magic bloom you want everyone to see forever, you want the highest resolution setting your camera has. (Think Cover Photo!)

The last criteria was battery life (actually it was money, but that one tends to get stretched more than the others!). There are two routes to go with a battery. The first is to own a camera that can use AA batteries. This has the advantage of always being able to
purchasing fresh batteries when and where needed. You can also buy the higher premium rechargeable AA types, but that will set you back for the cost of both the premium batteries and a quality charger. I chose to go with a camera that had a rechargeable battery designed for the camera, yet had other manufacturers who make that model of battery (read: cheaper). This way I can plug the camera in at a show or in the hotel room at night for a fresh charge. Also keep in mind if you purchase a digital camera with a LED display, that display will drain a battery much more quickly. An LED display on all the time and AA batteries could mean frequent battery changes. Cold weather also drains batteries faster.

If you email me at primroses@gci.net I would be happy to tell you what I ended up buying and why. Of course then you may take a look at some of the pictures in Primroses and decide what NOT to buy. Buying a camera doesn’t teach you how to use it flawlessly, but like most things you hopefully get better over time with practice (tell my auriculas that!). Talk to as many people as possible and get as many opinions as you can. Like most of these decisions, there are trade-offs between models and manufacturers. Try to determine what will be the highest use of the camera and balance that with your budget, then decide what bells, whistles and styling appeal to you.

If you have pictures in electronic format you wish to contribute to Primroses, please call or email me and I will be happy to work with you.

Good Luck!

Gig Narrows News
by Dorothy Dwyer

Our last meeting for the year (summer off) was held June 13th where we all enjoyed a lovely potluck get-together in gorgeous weather. We also had a business meeting, which entailed finding a better name for our chapter. Four suggestions have been offered and will be decided on in the September meeting. Two members were appointed to set up some by-laws, also to be presented at the September meeting.

We are very anxious to sponsor a Primrose Show as soon as possible, but to have to raise some finances first, so a show may be forth coming in Spring of 2005 unless we win the lottery.

An exchange of plants and also sale of plants is held at each meeting to help build our finances. (So far I have been financing what expenses we have had i.e. mailings etc.)

As for the photo that Ed Buyarski took when he visited with us, I do not have a copy (my e-mail does not do me that favor yet) I can only reveal the names of the membership as they were all there at that time. They are, Rosetta Jones, Dorothy Springer, Jewel Doering, Corenne Hall, Lady Jo Peterson, Georgia Haghaug, Lesley Phillips, April Boettinger and myself. Unfortunately April attends when she can and was not there when the photo was taken. We have the promise of about four more members.

Primula in Denmark
by Knud A. Moeller

After World War 2 the knowledge and cultivation of primula has increased enormously in Denmark, thanks to many skilled gardeners in England and Germany. Many hobby gardeners began going to England and Scotland in order to visit gardens there. There they had a chance to see all the new sorts, and they learned how to grow them. They also joined foreign special clubs or societies, and by doing so gained more knowledge and useful information. Today primula are grown in most Danish gardens, not only European species and their many hybrids, but also a larger range of East-Asian primula, the easy as well as the difficult ones.

The Danish Primula Society was founded in 1982 by a group of interested primula growers in Denmark. The society has grown bigger and has today about 350 members. Twenty percent are members from the other Scandinavian countries. The purpose of the society is to promote the knowledge and interest of primula. This is done by the following internal activities. 1. Publication of a quarterly with colour photos. 2. Publication of a seed and member list in January. The seed list is split up into “bought seeds” from dealers in England, Germany, France and Japan, and “given seeds” from members. 3. Lending of books in Danish, German, English, Norwegian and Swedish. 4. Arrangement of sale of books to the members. 5. Arrangement of meetings during winter with special lectures, slides, exchange of skills and experiences and exchange of plants. The following are external activities: 1. Lectures about primula in other garden societies and special societies. 2. Open gardens. 3. Participation at plant and garden exhibitions and plant and garden fairs. 4. Distribution of brochures to get new members, and a homepage (www.primulaklub.dk).

The climate in Denmark is not always kind to primula growers. During the period from mid October till mid March we get changing periods with deep frost, snow, sleet and rain in the nights. This means that mostly moisture without a constant layer of protecting snow - that the difficult sorts of primulas must be covered with a transparent kind of protection against moisture, and spruce branches against frost, or they may be placed in green houses, garden frames or plastic tunnels. In summer, in May, June and July, the late blooming sorts may get too little rain, which often happens, and it will be necessary to water the beds and nursery.

The internet and new methods of payment across the borders have had a great influence on Danish hobby gardeners as well. Access to new knowledge and insight has been improved. The access to homepages of special societies, seed and plant dealers, photo archives, private homepages, etc. and an easier way to buy books, seeds and plants across the borders. All this has made it much more easy for us to obtain better knowledge and - for all of us - better possibilities for success with primulas.
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The primula of choice for us is the auricula - but we do or will do as many species as we can find as well as some choice hybrids. We are also establishing a nice collection of some of the other primulaceae such as dedecachan and soldanella. We are mail order and also do assorted plant sales. We hope to have our catalog online for the 2003 season.

CATALOG $2.00 Available Now

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Barnhaven Primroses

Barnhaven has been in existence as a primula and polyanthus breeder for more than sixty years now, and we are very proud of its traditions. Our primulas are grown to be hardy. We want you to love our primulas and polyanthus flowers as much as we do and we take enormous care to ensure that your seeds reach you in good condition. Please follow our growing instructions carefully. Barnhaven seeds are only available from our address here in Plestin-le-Greves.

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email: Barnhaven@wanadoo.fr
Online catalog, pricelist, and ordering info found at www.barnhavenprimroses.com

American Primrose Society

On-line Website

If you have not visited the APS Website recently you may wish to do so! Our web-site has a new look, all the information has been updated, and new content is being added regularly. Come Visit!

www.americanprimroses.org

Prima! Discussion Group

APS Membership not required. Members from around the world! Novice to highly experienced. Email message boards, 2 weekly on-line chats, photo archive and more!

http://groups@yahoo.com/group/primulas
or email: terry@auriculas17.freeserve.co.uk
The purpose of this society is to bring the people interested in Primula together in an organization to increase the general knowledge of and the interest in the collecting, growing, breeding, showing and using in the landscape and garden the genus Primula in all its forms and to serve as a clearing house for collecting and disseminating information about Primula.

Membership in the Society includes a subscription to the quarterly publication Primroses, Seed Exchange privileges, Slide Library, and the opportunity to join a Round Robin. Membership renewals are due November 15th and are delinquent at the first of the year.

Membership and Renewal Rates
(Membership runs on the calendar year. Renewals are always due 11/15)

- Individual, Domestic and Canada, One Calendar Year at $25.00
- Individual, Domestic and Canada, Three Calendar Years at $70.00
- Individual, Overseas One Calendar Year at $32.00
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Please make checks payable to the American Primrose Society. Receipts will not be sent unless requested (S.A.E. Please)