

50th Anniversary Issue

Primroses

Fall 1991
Volume 49, No. 4





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PRIMROSES

Quarterly of the
American Primrose Society

Fall 1991
Volume 49, Number 4

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Photographs were taken by
Cy Happy except where noted in photo-
graph credits.

Many of the black and white photos for
this issue were taken from the editor's
box of historical black and white
photos which are not always credited.
Portrait photos were taken from old
quarterlies. If credits were missed,
please accept the editor's apologies.

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AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

Anniversary Issue

In celebration of 50 years.

The American Primrose Society became a reality some years after the idea first occurred to founding members. Keen primula growers had struggled to organize formally for two or three years before the society actually registered and the first show was held in 1941. Shortly after that show, a way was found to reproduce the bulletins, which were mimeographed and distributed to members starting in 1942. These were war years, and the effort to make the society a reality must have been tremendous.

Fifty years later the society is commemorating its golden anniversary with this special edition of the quarterly bulletin *Primroses*. In this issue are reminiscences of long-time members of the American Primrose Society and a tribute to some of the plants that have been produced in the Pacific Northwest area by members of the society. Only primroses and auriculas that have stood the test of time and are still grown by Society members today have been included. It is nice to talk of wonderful plants that have been grown, but more satisfactory to admire ones that are still available today.

Society members and Chapters have cooperatively pitched in to raise and donate the extra funds needed to cover the cost of color photographs of these splendid primrose and auricula plants. May this inspire all of the current members to continue with enthusiasm and energy to grow and develop fine primroses and auriculas that will be the rivals of the outstanding plants developed within the society in the first fifty years.

The editor wishes to sincerely thank all those who have helped with this keepsake edition of *Primroses*.

Maedythe Martin

Maedythe Martin,
Editor

Thank You

Acknowledgements and thanks are made to the following for their kind financial support in producing this special anniversary issue of the American Primrose Society quarterly bulletin **Primroses**.

- * June Skidmore, in memory of Brian Skidmore.
- * Washington State Chapter of the American Primrose Society, Gene Reichle, President.
- * Oregon Primrose Society, Thelma Genheimer, President.
- * Valley-Hi Chapter, Oregon, Etha Tate, President.
- * Eastside Primula Society, Washington, Thea Oakley, President.
- * Tacoma Primula Society, Washington, Candy Strickland, President.
- * Goldsmith Seeds, Gilroy, California.
- * Doretta Klaber Chapter

Great Stories, Good Information

There are some wonderful stories of primroses, auriculas and the members who grew them in this treasure trove of society history. Or order a cultural chart — lots of information on one large chart you can hang on the wall.

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Donations from the Chapters have assisted directly with the additional cost of producing four of the eight color photos and the extra color printing cost associated with the color photographs. The Eastside Chapter in particular has donated funds to sponsor a full color page.

Appreciation is expressed on behalf of the American Primrose Society. You have all participated in producing a memento for a special time in the Society's history.

Special thanks are extended to Flip Fenili, Cy and Rita Happy and Thea Oakley for their efforts in raising corporate donations.

Issues not available:

Vol. 1 No. 1, 2, 3, 4	Vol. 14 No. 1
Vol. 2 No. 1, 2	Vol. 25 No. 3
Vol. 3 No. 3	Vol. 33 No. 1
Vol. 6 No. 3, 4	Vol. 34 No. 1
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Memories of Florence Bellis

by Richard Critz

I knew that during my first trip to the West Coast after becoming editor of the American Primrose Society quarterly in 1989, my wife Carolyn, and I had to meet Florence Bellis. Since we were making a big thing of this trip — visits to British Columbia, to the Seattle area and into Oregon — we decided to spend a day going to Florence's house on the Oregon coast. It was a long way down from Portland to Lincoln City; and as we turned into North Oar Drive, we both decided to make the visit brief. After all, Florence was not well, and this was just a courtesy call.

Little did we know! Florence's house was small and so cute, but it was badly in need of paint and repairs. Her car, tightly wedged into the tiny carport, had not been driven in a while — in fact, the place looked deserted, and the lady herself was long in appearing when we knocked. But funny, almost as soon as she opened the door, the three of us were drawn together as if by magnets.

We found so much to share, and the afternoon passed as if on wings. The Critz' are not your regular outgoing people (we're shy) and I take it Florence was generally of the same temperament, but during the course of that day all of us opened up depths and walked together down avenues of sharing we would never have thought possible with strangers. And strangers we did not remain, for a warm and lasting love sprang into being that day that is among the most treasured memories of my life.



Florence Bellis's portrait as it appeared in the *Bulletin* in 1953.

We talked at length about Florence's book, **Waste Not, Want Not**, which she was just completing and which she wanted so desperately to have published. Interestingly, just the day before I had talked with Richard Abel of Timber Press and was able to make the connections that eventually resulted — after many arduous months of revising and polishing — in the publication of Florence's scintillating, wise and altogether beautiful **Gardening and Beyond**.

continued on page 4

Memories continued

We talked about the founding of the society. Florence had a delightfully humorous way of telling a story; and her remembrances, comments and asides had us in gales of laughter.

We talked about the **Quarterly**, of which she was the founding editor, and which she got out for its first 10 years. I told her of my plans for the magazine and received the encouragement and support I so needed to keep purposefully at this exciting job.

We talked about Florence's life and work at Barnhaven and before, about her research on primulas preceding the founding of her business, about her joys and sorrows, her marriages and friends. We talked and talked — and it was all so indescribably satisfying and rich. Until suddenly we realized it was time to eat. So what did she do but heat up a pot of soup she had been

making and we all feasted together and talked some more.

After that wonderful day I only saw Florence in person one other time, but we corresponded regularly and voluminously for the remaining two or three years of her life. I wish I had the power to convey to you the respect and affection which I had and have for that gallant, talented — and, yes rather lonely and often misunderstood — woman. My hope is that she is enjoying a glorious hereafter, as known as she was knowing. ❖

Richard Critz was editor of Primroses from 1988 to 1989. He lives in Newtown Square, PA, a part of the country perhaps less hospitable to primroses than the west coast, but that has only encouraged him in his ongoing fascination with them. We thank him for sending us this touching reminiscence.

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A Green-Edged Auricula 'Etha Tate'

by Etha Tate

The 1942 American Primrose Society show was held in the auditorium of the American Public Service Building in Portland, Oregon. Ivanel (Ivie) Agee and I attended. It was a beautiful show — big floral gardens, tables full of primroses — and garden club arrangements all around the balcony.

Mrs. Rae Selling Berry had a beautiful display including exhibition auriculas. Ivie said, "I'm going to have some edged auriculas someday." She hybridized many auriculas after that, as well as other primroses. Two show auriculas were named for good friends: a green edged named 'Etha Tate' for me, and a yellow self called 'Mary Zach' after another friend.

Mary Zach was a devoted member of the Primrose Society and a great grower. She had a big bed of 'Buttercup' which was the envy of all. She was also very generous

with her plants. She was a director for a number of years, treasurer for three years, and president in 1952. I remember after one of the big Primrose Society shows Mary called everyone together to present the awards and trophies. This was the first time it had happened. She insisted that this be a part of every show after that. ❖

There have been so many enthusiastic members of the society from Oregon over the years. Who better to send us a story from Oregon primula enthusiasts than Etha, a prime mover of this dedicated group who is hosting and organizing the National Show on behalf of the society at the symposium 'Primula Worldwide' to be held in Oregon in 1992.

Etha Tate presents this little reminiscence on behalf of both herself and the Oregon members.



*The green edged
auricula 'Etha Tate.'*

A Visit with Susan Watson

by John Kerridge

Did you ever cross any primroses?

Yes, I'm sure I did. (Thea Foster, former editor, attributes 'Butterball', a cheerful yellow julie hybrid, to Susan Watson. It was developed by her in the late 1960s sometime after she moved to Vancouver. See note in the spring 1990 issue of the quarterly, p. 54.)

I remember when Linda Eickman developed pink primroses. She was the first to get good, clear pink ones. I published a picture of one of hers in the *Quarterly*. I was editor of the *Quarterly*, so I never published anything about my own developments. (Susan Watson was editor from 1952 to 1956.)

You were the editor of the *Quarterly*?

Yes, but I was even more interested in the *Dictionary* (*Pictorial Dictionary of the Cultivated Species of the Genus Primula*). I needed it, for reference as editor. I had started it on my own by keeping a looseleaf notebook for each primula. When it was done, it was well recognized in the United Kingdom by Harold Fletcher at the Edinburgh Botanic Garden. I corresponded with Sir W. Wright Smith, too. He was quite shy, as I remember.



The editor of the Bulletin, Susan Watson, from a tribute to her on her retirement by Florence Bellis. (Fall 1956 issue.)

The *Dictionary* took me two years. It was hard work, but I enjoyed it. Mostly I used Smith and Fletcher as a reference. I used the Woodward Library at the University of British Columbia — I lived there, almost. I visited it every day.

There's an article in the Fall 1956 issue of the *Quarterly* about my time as editor.

Was there a Chapter of the American Primrose Society in Vancouver?

Yes, the Vancouver group was a Chapter. My husband, Jim Watson, started the Canadian Primula and Alpine Society in the

Hotel Vancouver. Vic Cosley was also a founding member of the alpine club. When I moved from Brunswick Beach I gave him all my primrose stock.

The Brunswick Beach property was out on the way to Horseshoe Bay. We had five acres. There was nothing when we first moved there. But we macadamized the road. After a while, bus loads of people came, even a group from New York City. ❖

(Smith & Fletcher published a 'Summary of the Genus *Primula*' in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* from 1941 through 1949.)

John Kerridge talked to Susan Watson in the nursing home where she lived in North Vancouver just a few days before she died on September 30, 1991. We are grateful to him for his persistence in finding a time to talk to her when she felt well enough.

Susan's contribution to the society through the Dictionary will always be remembered. It is a treasure to have this little insight into the early development of the Pictorial Dictionary from its originator so shortly before she died.

MEMORIAL

Susan Bellamy Watson died September 30, 1991 in North Vancouver, B.C. She was editor of the American Primula Society *Quarterly* for four years, 1952 to 1956. She also formulated and patented 'Sturdy,' a fertilizer product (0-10-10) for encouraging strong roots on seedlings.

She was a founding member of the Canadian Primula and Alpine Society, now known as the Alpine Garden Club of B.C. and was an honorary life member of this society.

An avid gardener before her health failed, she was also a great cook and hostess, a talented embroiderer and a lover of classical music and art. After she was confined to a wheelchair, she and her daughter made two trips to Europe to visit famous art galleries.

She will be sorely missed and remembered by her family and many friends.

From notes kindly taken at her memorial service in Vancouver by a friend, Nan Sherlock.

Reminiscences

by Beth Tait

You were on the executive of the American Primrose Society?

I was treasurer for 12 years. (Beth was treasurer from 1962 to 1973.) I'd send out packages of seed to the new members, and they'd write back. I'd be up answering letters until two in the morning.

Grace Conboy and Susan Watson used to come down from Canada. Susan had the **Dictionary** printed up there in Canada. (The **Pictorial Dictionary of the Cultivated Species of the Genus 'Primula.'**) Then she sent it down here to me. But the post office wouldn't release it, because it had been printed outside the United States. It sat there for about three months, while we tried everything we could think of to get it released. Finally they sent me a notice they were going to burn it.

I couldn't think what else to do. So I took a friend, and we got in the station wagon and went to the post office. "I still can't release it," the man at the post office said. I just looked him in the eye and said, "Would you like to take a walk?" He looked back at me for a moment and then said "I believe I would." We didn't waste any time: we loaded the **Dictionary** into the station wagon and left.

How did you get started growing primroses and auriculas?

I bought them from John Shuman in Seattle. He had auriculas from Frank Michaud up in Canada. There were all kinds — alpine, edged shows and selfs. I also corresponded with C.F. Hill in England, and he sent me offsets of named auriculas.

Once I sent for 50 julies from Ireland. They arrived at Hoboken, New Jersey, the point of entry, and by the time I got them, they were mush. Maybe one, 'Burgundy Wine,' survived.

Alice Hills Baylor had a catalog of julies at the time, and I ordered some of them. In fact I sent some julies to Dr. Haro in Japan in 1959 or 1960. I corresponded with him regularly then. I've often wondered if the Sakata julies came from those plants.

Where did you grow all the primroses and auriculas?

There were rows and rows of primroses and auriculas, all under laths right outside here. I grew a lot of my own seed and seed from the Society and Florence Bellis, too, though she was Florence Levy then. You know how they measured out the seed at Barnhaven in those days? Lew Levy used a shell from a 22 short bullet. He soldered on a handle, and they used the bullet case as a little scoop. You got a lot of seed in one scoop.



Beth Tait, owner of Primrose Acres.

I planted the seed in flats, probably 30 or 40 each year. They'd come up thick as fleas. The seed went in on the soil mix in the flats, then I'd cover them with paper towels. I'd water over the paper towels with warm water three days in a row. In about a week up would come the first little white tails sprouting out of the seeds. I used to love to see them.

There were so many beds of primulas and auriculas out there — probably 3,000 plants. One day I noticed an older lady was standing there in the middle of all those primrose plants, crying. I asked her what was wrong and she said, "I think I've died and gone to heaven."

You raised a number of new varieties?

Yes, I'd take the plants from those beds in the lath house into the greenhouses and

hand pollinate them. That's how 'American Beauty' (red self show auricula) and 'Anna Francis' (yellow self show auricula) originated.

I had some different colored Cowichans, too — light blue and orange.

One year we had a flood. The water was seven feet deep in places. It took out the lath house and all the plants. I lost every primrose and auricula plant. I just never had the heart to start up with them again after that. ❖

Beth Tait made a significant contribution to the society, both as treasurer and in growing and developing show standard plants. But more than that, she spread her enthusiasm for primulas and auriculas to others. Thanks to Beth and to Don Keefe, who arranged this interview, for providing us with some of her memories.



Frank Michaud.

A Little Reminiscence

by Rosetta Jones

About 40 years ago a notice in the evening paper about a display of primroses at Frederick & Nelson in downtown Seattle started my long association with the American Primrose Society.

I was working in an office nearby, so the next day on my lunch hour I went to Fredericks and found a beautiful display of polyanthus primroses such as I had never seen before. On duty at the display were Dorothy Stredicke (later Dickson) and Ralph Balcom. I learned much later that Carl Starker and Dorothy had made a quick trip down to California to get plants in bloom. This was February and no plants in



Dorothy Dickson presiding at a display table.



Rosetta and Allen Jones.

Seattle had flowers! It was a bit of a cheat, but it sure made for a beautiful display!

I went to the next meeting of the Washington State Chapter of the American Primrose Society which was held in the meeting house at the Arboretum. Dorothy came to be my very best friend. I miss her still. ❖

*Rosetta has been a dedicated and valued member of the society for the better part of two decades. Her work in hybridizing double *acaulis* is well recognized by primula growers of the Pacific Northwest. Thanks, Rosetta, for sending this little historical vignette.*

Remembrances

by Loie Benedict

Barnhaven

I remember the first time that I visited Barnhaven. The nursery was called Barnhaven because the house was an old remodelled barn on stilts above a stream. On the hill above the creek was an old apple orchard where primroses were growing. It was very attractive.

The primulas were lifted from the orchard ground and brought down near the stream where there was a wickiup. The beds were at waist height and could be reached from both sides. The primulas were planted in blocks of the same color for pollination. The flower petals were stripped off before the flowers even opened, so that the beds presented a curious sight.

In the stream bed candelabras and bell-flowered types, 'Asian primroses,' as Florence Bellis called them, were growing along with magnificent specimen of *Meconopsis betonicifolia* nearby.

Mrs. Berry

Rae Selling Berry was deaf but read lips very well. She had lots of yappy dogs that would nip at visitors' heels as her guests walked about the garden. Of course, Rae couldn't hear them yap.

Rae had only the best of European-raised auriculas before anyone else in the Northwest was growing them. I recall one of my pictures of her *Primula cuneifolia* ssp. *saxifragifolia* was published in an early

issue of the *Quarterly*. The flowering of this rarity really pleased her. She had special frames for growing her alpine treasures that she raised from seed, some from the great expeditions to China and other exotic locations.

Japanese Primroses

Carl Starker had really unusual plants and was also a flower arranger of note. I visited his garden twice. He was a sardonic man, but lots of fun, and could be very amusing. He went in for *Primula seiboldii* in great variety and raised some really splendid forms that he showed at the Portland primrose shows.

Pink Polyanthus

I remember how exciting it was to see Linda Eickman's first pink polyanthus at the Portland show. These were the beginning of the 'Warm Laughter' and 'Crown Pink' strains. Later, of course, I grew plants from her seed. This was a real milestone and a color breakthrough in the polyanthus group. ❖

Mention Loie's name and watch people's faces light up. A plantswoman of the first order, and still growing strong, Loie lives near Auburn in her wonderful garden full of plant treasures. She was on the board of the society for many years, and a judge for society shows. Thanks to her, and to Gerry Flintoff who recorded these memories, for sharing these special remembrances.

Peter Klein

by Cyrus Happy

How can I describe Peter Klein?

Self-educated farm boy from northeast Illinois, Illinois farmer with wife and a boy and a girl, widower with two small children, employee of Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation during World War II, or operator of a small nursery in Tacoma after the war until his death in July of 1957?

Throughout his life Peter Klein was a keen observer of nature, especially flowers. He was a devout Catholic; and no matter how financially strapped, he always provided flowers for the altar at St. Ann's in Tacoma.

By his example and his urging, his gardening friends learned how much more there was to gardening beyond planting a packet of seeds. For many of us he opened the window to the world of rare and exciting plants and the creation of new ones.

During the 1950s I stopped often on my way home from work to see what was new at Pete's. On one of my first visits I remember telling him about *Meconopsis sherriffiae* pictured in the latest Royal Horticultural Society bulletin. Without saying anything, he took me into the back greenhouse and showed me a pot of it in full bloom — lustrous soft pink poppy-like flowers.

This happened again with *Primula sonchifolia*, the difficult petiolarid from the

Himalayan woodlands. After several failures he had requested and received fresh green seed still in the pod from Jack Drake in Scotland. He planted them immediately and watered them every morning with warm water for ten days. In 21 days they had germinated. On one visit I was shown resting buds; on the next visit the buds were bursting with flowers.

One May he showed me how to make leaf cuttings of *P. scapigera* by gently pulling off the older leaves. When they came away easily, there would be a tiny bud at the base of the stem from which would come a new plant.

He loved to find plants that would cross, and he got up early to experiment. Peter did his pollinating at dawn when the pistil was most moist and receptive. In 1954 he found he could get seed by putting *P. clarkei* pollen on *P. rosea* 'Delight.' From this came the popular hybrid *P.* 'Peter Klein.'

Pete read most of the literature on double primroses before he started to create some of his own. The experts all claimed doubles were completely sterile, the pollen and seed-producing parts being replaced by petals. Pete felt otherwise. He pulled the blossoms of 'Quaker's Bonnet' apart all one season. The last few had pollen-bearing tissue on the edges of a few petals. He put the pollen on a few selected singles. The resulting seedlings were all single. They were crossed with the white-edged purple 'Marie Crousse.' These seedlings were also all single and were crossed with 'Burgundy Beauty' pollen.



Peter Klein and his dog, Buster.

Finally double seedlings appeared. The first was a lovely blue. These new doubles were then used as pollen parents, and his strain of doubles was established.

Pete then started on double Julianas (the first, a yellow, appeared in 1953) and also on a double Jack-in-the-Green program, which was in process when he died. Pete's daughter, Lucille Cilenti, saved Pete's seed in her refrigerator for many years. Herb and Dorothy Dickson grew some of the julie/jack seed five or six years later and produced 'Jay Jay,' which happens to be a good seed parent for producing more doubles.

Pete purchased a packet of edged show auricula seed about 1950, probably from Cyril Haysom. He was not pleased with the resulting seedlings but he crossed the best of them, a gray, with a green. From that cross came a green-edged show auricula, the 1957 Bamford Trophy winner, now called 'Peter Klein.'

Another edged show auricula from that cross won in 1958. I used pollen from 'Peter Klein' green to produce the seed I sold worldwide in the 1960s. Some of the current British greens look much like 'Peter Klein' with wide green edge and nearly closed tube.

From Florence Bellis (then Levy) at Barnhaven he got seed of gold laced polyanthus and started producing choice plants. His instinct for selecting parent plants brought him success with these plants too.

Peter Klein knew the old florist rule, "Second best plants make the best seed parents."

Peter died of cancer at age 65 on July 17, 1957. The results of his encouragement, insight and hybridizing live on. ❖

President, Cy Happy was fortunate in his long association with Peter Klein. We are grateful to Cy for writing up these remembrances for those of us who never knew Peter Klein.

Old Times in the American Primrose Society

by Herb Dickson

Back in the early 1950s I was working as a correctional officer at the federal penitentiary on McNeil Island, and living at the bachelor officers' quarters on the island. For something to do, I grew some polyanthus in beds around the quarters. I had recently joined the Tacoma Primrose Society.

Even though I knew very little about primroses, I thought I had some nice plants. I asked at the society meeting which two I should bring, as I had to hand carry the plants to the boat to get off the island, and from the boat to the bus and on the bus to the show. I was advised to bring any color but yellow. Being a natural rebel, I took a yellow one that I liked. Evidently other people liked it, too. It won the trophy as the best polyanthus in the show. That was 1954.

In 1955 Tacoma was hosting the first national show to be held outside the Oregon area. I was young and full of vigor, with time on my hands. The Society talked me into being show chairman. Cy Happy was president of the Tacoma Primrose Society, and worked at the bank in the daytime. I was working nights at the prison. Many were the trips I made to the bank where Cy and I discussed primroses and the show at his teller's window. Cy was able to get us permission for the use of some bank



Herb Dickson as pictured in the Winter 1957 issue of the Primrose Quarterly.

property for the show. It was an old transit barn which had a big parking lot. It was right downtown, only one block from the bus depot.

This was the first national show in the Tacoma area and everybody was enthusiastic and willing to pitch in and work. It took a lot of work to clean up that old barn. Then we had to lay out the floor displays, arrange for the tables for the show plants and competition winners, and set up the plant sales area. The Tacoma Parks Department put on a wonderful display.

There was no heat in the building: good for the plants, but bad for the people working at the show.

I was full of ideas for publicity. Cy and I wrote articles for magazines, got information out to the garden clubs in Washington and Oregon, were interviewed on radio, got notices published in local papers and announcements in all flower publications. We emphasized that this was the first national primrose show in the area.

Come show day, the Tacoma paper said the show would open at 11 am instead of at 1 pm as all our other publicity said. A crowd of two or three hundred assembled outside the car barn on the street. At 11:30 some broke through the temporary door and swarmed in. We were not through judging. It took me and two others to push the crowd outside again so the judging could continue. Within an hour when the show actually opened, it was estimated there were 2,000 people ready to flood into the show. By the end of the day over more than 5,000 people had attended. Even the turnout for the banquet and annual meeting that evening was more than we had planned.

Auriculas were the big new thing at that show. Beside Denna Snuffer's first new double auriculas, beautiful auricula plants

were brought by Ralph Balcom and John Shuman, who were two good growers of show auriculas at that time. I will always remember the suburb plant of the alpine auricula 'Argus' grown by John Shuman. It got the trophy for best plant in show.

Since 1955 I have exhibited at many shows and won many trophies but no one has ever been able to corner me into being show chairman again. Cy and I were a good team. We worked well together on that show, and we still work well together 36 years later. ❖

Herb Dickson could be characterized as the backbone of the Primrose Society. His enthusiasm for primroses and auriculas is still as strong today as it was in the 1950s. And Herb has maintained some named varieties of plants in cultivation through care and dedication to his nursery stock. Advisor to our society, he is a source of information, and we want to say thanks for the stories in his reminiscences provided for this issue.

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Down Memory Lane

by Izzetta M. Renton

Way back in the olden days around 1910 I remember seeing my first primrose plants in the garden of a dear old lady. She was called a woman doctor and was an extremely intelligent midwife. She traded seed and plants by mail all over the United States and other countries. Her plants included a few common kinds grown from seed — white and pink, and some cowslips and oxslips as well, as I recall. Another memory I have from the years before World War I is that my godmother grew several kinds of primroses in her garden.

Then, in the 1920s, I came to live here in the Snoqualmie Valley, and primrose gardens were plentiful. Around Kirkland and Juaneta there were several growers, and the primrose shows in the spring were fairly lands of color.

Our very dear friends, Nor and Hattie Reimstetters, owned Flower Acres, a nursery specializing in rhododendrons, azaleas and primroses. They came up with a pale yellow double acaulis which was the envy of the primrose nursery across the street owned by a man named Day. Mr. Day wanted that primrose real bad. Nor Reimstetter didn't want to sell it, so he put a price of \$500 on all the stock he had. Well, Mr. Day bought it. But the first year he divided it so severely he lost the whole lot.

A little later on, I remember Fred Huey was also just outside of Juaneta. He had the Hopkins Nursery, which had lots of primroses. And up on what was known as Finn Hill, Beth Tait had a lovely collection of primroses in her nursery.

Elsa Frick, out in the University District, had a fascinating nursery and she carried 20 or more kinds of asiatic primroses and several European ones, as well as some julie hybrids. She also had the true *Primula juliae* species, a tiny creeper, growing right along the ground. I've never seen this form since I lost mine nine years ago.

The American Rock Garden Society members around Seattle grew lots of different primulas in their gardens. Back in the 1930s 400 gardeners went up to Victoria for a meeting that lasted a week. We made our headquarters at the Empress Hotel and we visited Butchart Gardens and private gardens and took in the flower show at the Willows. We saw hundreds of primroses of many different kinds.

Herb and Dorothy Dickson carried lots of kinds of primroses in their nursery at Tukwilla, on the edge of Renton, in the 1960s.

Every spring we went down to Oregon to visit the different nurseries. Many of them were extensive. Carl Starker at Jennings Lodge on the edge of Portland carried acaulis primroses, alpine auriculas, several *juliae* hybrids and some *Primula sieboldii* hybrids.

And then I met Florence Bellis (then Levy) at Barnhaven. Florence was a warm friendly person and had a fascinating nursery. She and Lew Levy, her husband at that time, lived in a renovated red barn. There was a little creek ran right through



The barn at Barnhaven.

the nursery. One winter it flooded and just about wiped out the nursery. The loss was tremendous in dollars but also in plants, the result of years of work.

Florence was developing the Barnhaven strains at that time that were to become known and grown all over the world. She used what is known as line breeding and saved just the strongest ones with the clearest colors. I remember the Grand Canyon strain, which was brown shades; the Indian Reds, which produced reddish-purple shades; Marine Blue strain with the

purest blues imaginable; Harvest Yellow, from creamy yellow to deep gold; Winter White with the loveliest clear white flowers. These I remember from along in the 1940s.

Then in the 1950s she came up with Coral Salmon, Apricot and the Desert Sunset strain, three gold rimmed chocolate, coffee and cocoa shades.

The start of these, I understood, came from the Mustead primroses produced by Gertrude Jekyll in England in the 1880s.

Memory Lane continued

Of course, Florence spent years improving the strains she is remembered for today. In 1956 or 1957 she started to work on the Cowichan strain. Then, in 1958, she began to get pink: appleblossom pink, raspberry and a really true pink. She had started to work on the doubles in 1960 and we know what wonderful success she had with them. Until she finally sold the nursery property, I never missed a spring visit to Barnhaven.

Peter Klein was also making a name with doubles. Then after his death, William Graves moved in. He was interested in primroses. Well, he worked away from home and just couldn't provide the constant attention they needed. The plants were left sitting in a shade house in the flats and he failed to water them. He lost the whole bunch.

When Florence sold the property known as Barnhaven and went to the Oregon coast to live, she took the best plants of the doubles as well as some of the best of her other plants with her. She continued to produce seed of the double acaulis primroses. Jared Sinclair in England carried on with her hybridizing work in England. Her strains have gone on for 20 years or more.

About the time Florence left Barnhaven, I, too, was working on double primroses. I used some of Florence's plants and the knowledge she so kindly passed on to me, and I have had wonderful success. I have grown hundreds of them, in all colors of the rainbow. Some have one shade of color edged with another shade, or with a silver

edge. And some are fragrant. It has been a wonderful experience. No, I don't sell them. I occasionally give one to a special friend. But my garden is full of them.

I am fortunate in having a garden in a protected place where I don't get the cold wind in winter or the hot wind in early summer that blows over the pass. I live right up against the main Cascade Mountains, but in a protected spot. The mountains come out to a point of rocks that sends the winds and sleet and snow on down the valley, leaving my garden degrees warmer.

My sister lives four miles from me out in the main valley of the Snoqualmie Pass and can't keep primroses going from year to year in her garden.

I guess we've wandered long enough in memory lane, so I'll close this with a wish that all your gardens are thriving and doing well. ♦

It is indeed a treat to have such a lovely miscellanea of remembrances as Izetta has sent. This remarkable member of the society had a nursery business of her own in the Snoqualmie area for years. Still going strong despite her venerable accumulation of years, she is an active member in the Washington State Chapter and a fund of information. Thanks for these treasures, Izetta.

**Membership renewals
are due! See page 46.**

Howard Larkin

by Dorothy Springer

Howard Larkin was growing primroses as hardy as perennials in Tacoma, Washington in the 1940s, long before commercial growers discovered the value of primroses as spring bedding plants.

Until he purchased his first plants from Dr. Tollefson of Steilacoom, Washington, Howard had never seen a primrose. Dr. Tollefson grew his plants as a hobby and only sold his excess plants. But Howard got some. Those first few plants gave Howard a case of primrose fever and started a new grower on a hobby of his own.

In the mid-1940s, Howard's mother read in the newspaper of an upcoming meeting of the Tacoma Primrose Society. Howard's interest was caught and he attended. This began his long relationship with that group. Several years ago the Society presented him with an honorary life membership for his many years of service.

Howard's reports as treasurer of the Tacoma Society, which he gave for over 10 years, consisted of only a twinkle in the eye and a brief "there's about x number of dollars in the treasury." But he was always very exact with the actual figures, contradicting his tongue-in-cheek method of reporting.

While he was Show Publicity Chairman, Howard sent the news of the Tacoma Primrose Society show to be held in the

street car barns all the way to the New York Times. The Times, in turn, actually sent out a reporter to cover the show.

Each year placards announcing the Tacoma show sprang up in all the nurseries, libraries and wherever Howard could convince a merchant to display one. The thirty foot banners which stretched across the streets in downtown Tacoma to announce the show were also Howard's idea.

Seed from Vetterle and Reinelt started Howard off in a new direction: growing primroses himself from seed. He bought the packets in single color lots instead of in mixed colors, and grew the plants in color groups in his large yard near 6th and Prospect in Tacoma. When the yard became too small, he moved his plants across town to Pacific Avenue. But the commute was too far so he rented a field on the west slope in the suburb of University Place. And there he grew primroses by the hundreds.

Plants from the field were sold with the large rootball wrapped in tin foil, three plants to a shoe box. These colorful boxes of primroses, along with Howard's other specialty, gorgeous blue violas, became familiar harbingers of spring.

continued on page 20

Howard Larkin continued

Then Howard met Marie! On a visit to Boston Harbour Nursery near Olympia, Howard discovered a few plants of the famous old double primrose 'Marie Crousse.' These few plants were carefully tended and divided until there were over 2,000 plants growing in the hillside field.

'Marie Crousse' was also sold wrapped in foil, three big plants to a shoe box. "They sold like hotcakes," Howard said. People bought them a dozen or more at a time. Curiously, not one was ever brought to a Tacoma primrose show. But a bad Northwest winter, plus the poor soil in the field, eventually left Howard bereft of Marie.

The English firm of Gordon Douglas had seed of alpine auriculas and, when Howard

got some of this, he was off on another growing adventure. But by now, the commercial growers were flooding the primula market with very early blooming flashy pot-grown plants. The beautiful auriculas in their foil wrappings bloomed too late in the season to attract much interest when gardeners were buying petunias and marigolds. ❖

His current primrose crop consists of one plant in a pot, but Howard can still immediately locate his very first blue ribbon. It was awarded to one of his blue polyanthus which also got the award for Best Plant in Show. That was in 1954, the year the Tacoma show was held in the old Crawford restaurant on St. Helen's Avenue in downtown Tacoma.

In celebration of 50 years.

The fiftieth anniversary issue of the American Primrose Society bulletin commemorates the founding of the society by capturing in color some of the fine and garden worthy plants developed by members of the society. All the plants shown on these pages are still cherished and grown today in gardens of American Primrose Society members.



'Rapps Double Purple.' Profile on page 29.



White edged show auricula 'Snow Lady.' Profile on pages 29-30.



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'Dusty Double.' Profile on page 30.



Green edged auricula 'Peter Klein.' Profile on page 30.



Double auricula 'Brownie.' Profile on page 31.



'American Beauty' a red show self. Profile on page 31.



'Cornmeal' a show auricula. Profile on pages 31-32.



Show self auricula 'Mary Zach.' Profile on page 32.



Herb Dickson with his auriculas.

Many years of hybridizing and selecting brings breath taking displays during auricula time at Herb Dickson's Chehalis, Washington nursery.



Primula X Juliana 'Julie Jack.' Profile on page 32.



White Primula 'Peter Klein.' Profile on page 33.



Hose-in-Hose primrose 'Feathers.' Profile on pages 32-33.



Primula 'Peter Klein.' Profile on page 33.

Plant Profiles

Information about the primroses and auriculas featured in the color photographs.

PRIMULA MARGINATA

One of the most striking primula plants is *Primula marginata*. The edge of the leaves is regularly outlined with farina, and when it also happens to be significantly toothed, the jagged silver edge is very striking. Add to this large, semi-double, lilac blue flowers and the result is the handsome plant on the cover.

The originator of this beautiful plant is Ivanel (Ivie) Agee.

RAPP'S DOUBLE PURPLE'

This double auricula is one of the most handsome but also most reliable garden doubles in the Pacific Northwest. Many of us have been growing it for 15 years or so. As a result, it is found all over the Seattle/Tacoma area.

Al Rapp, the originator, started with garden auricula seed from Beth Tait which produced some plants with semi-double flowers. It was in the third generation that true doubles finally started showing up. One of these was this deep purple, attractive plant. There are always lots of offsets each year, and the plant does well in the garden or in a pot or frame.

'SNOW LADY'

The white edged show auricula 'Snow Lady' was first grown in the early 1930s from seed from England. But the source of the seed was always kept a secret by Mrs. Rae Berry the grower. No one knew if she kept the source a secret because she just didn't want to tell, or whether it was to prevent the person from being bothered.

In either case, the result was a splendid auricula very heavily dusted with meal, earning the name 'Snow Lady.' Slow to produce offsets, the plant has been consistently grown by dedicated auricula fanciers from the 1950s up to today. The flower has clearly defined zones between the paste, the dark ground and the meal covered petals, and can only be faulted in that the flower does not always open flat.

The story of 'Snow Lady's' presentation for naming by Ivanel Agee in 1950 is recorded in the summer *Quarterly* 1963, page 98.

A second mystery is the known existence of two clones of this auricula. One has been grown in the Portland area, Mrs. Berry's home town. This plant is chiefly distinguished by the number of offsets it produces. In order to have a plant with some vigor and form, the many offsets would have to be stripped away.

Another form is found in the Victoria area. This also has been grown for many years and has appeared regularly on the show benches of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Society. One can only speculate that it originated with the Hibbersons, friends of Mrs. Berry with whom she visited. They lived in a small cottage which had wide low rock walls in the front containing raised beds in the top to save less agile backs. In these beds they grew the choice alpine plants for which they were so well known. They also sold seed of edged auriculas in the 1950s. The Victoria clone is either a sibling plant from the

Plant Profiles continued

original seed that resulted in the Portland 'Snow Lady' or is a progeny of the original plant.

'Snow Lady' does produce pollen and has been used in hybridizing. Because of the heavy meal it can best be grown to show standards under some form of protection from the rain.

'DUSTY DOUBLE'

The old-fashioned character of this auricula is evident in the pointed petals, the flowers which don't open flat, and the unusual color: lavender green, striped with silver, with meal dusted over everything. Most mature flowers show an almost red striping among the other lavender and silver colors. The effect is indeed striking.

Cy Happy, the hybridizer, corresponded with Miss Winnifred Wynne in Ireland from the early 1950s until her death in the 1960s. On one occasion, she sent him auricula blossoms in the mail so he could see what the flower looked like. One of these was the old striped double, 'Mrs. Dargen.' There was a bit of viable pollen on one of the blossoms and it allowed Cy to use 'Mrs. Dargen' as one of the pollen parents of 'Dusty Double.'

Cy had grown three seeds of double auriculas received from the Royal Horticultural Society, and among them was a brownie-green double, which was fertile. Pollen from 'Mrs. Dargen,' put onto this unprepossessing double resulted in the 'Dusty Double.'

Like any good garden auricula, this plant is hardy, makes lots of offsets, and performs well in the open garden. If you want to

admire the full effect of the generous dusting of meal, you'll have to cover the plant through the worst of the winter rains. Cy still has this plant in his garden, and it has been spread successfully to interested growers in the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society due to Cy's generosity in bringing an offset to the editor in Victoria more than 10 years ago.

GREEN EDGED AURICULA***'PETER KLEIN'***

Given the right conditions, this green edged show auricula will flourish and produce well filled flower stems. 'Peter Klein' was named by its originator when he was finally able to produce a premier quality green edged auricula that met his standards. As mentioned in the article about Peter Klein in this issue, he was using seed from Cyril Haysom in England.

The handsome flowers have a good tube, with a narrow band of black body color. This is a useful characteristic in hybridizing, as the narrow band of black body color appears to dominate in seedlings. Without it, you can end up with very untidy black selfs where the black ground color has taken over the whole petal tissue and no green edge is left. But the narrow ground and the green edge in 'Peter Klein' will carry through to the next generations of seedlings. Pollen, however, is scarce.

The flowers are surrounded by very round lettuce green leaves, and the plant will provide an acceptable number of offsets each year.

This edged auricula is still grown in the Seattle-Tacoma area by Herb Dickson, among others.

'BROWNIE'

Rosetta Jones has been hybridizing double acaulis primroses since the 1960s with wonderful success. Her plants have a robust character and the flower stalks are upright and short. The form of the plants is excellent, for the flowers all face upward on the strong stems. The colors range widely and the plants come true from seed in a suprisingly high proportion.

In the last few years Rosetta has branched into hybridizing double auriculas. 'Brownie' is one of the results. Very full, with a slightly frilled turn to the petals, it is an arresting and yet an old fashioned auricula color: a russet brown.

The parents of this double auricula are seedlings from Earl Welch's double strain although some genes of Denna Snuffer's wonderful doubles may be included in there as well. Out of the double auricula seedlings, a plant with brown flowers showed up, and Rosetta worked with this to get her fine double auricula 'Brownie' in a subsequent generation.

'AMERICAN BEAUTY'

'American Beauty' lives up to its name: it's red, bright and beautiful. Its clear middle range red color is the most striking characteristic of this show self auricula. There is good balance in the flower between the ground color and the central white paste.

The plant has good form and strong, sturdy upright stems to display the flowers. In most years there is usually a good number of pips on each stem.

Beth Tait, the hybridizer of 'American Beauty', describes, in her reminiscences, how she would bring auricula seedling in bloom in from the frame house beds to the

green house for pollinating. Named auriculas obtained from Frank Michaud at Alpenglow Nursery in Vancouver, B.C., and seedling show auriculas from Haysom and Douglas seed, all obtainable in the 1950s, were likely the parents of this fine self.

A testimony to the plant's endurance, 'American Beauty' is still grown in the Seattle/Tacoma area, by Herb Dickson among others, and in Victoria, B.C.

'CORNMEAL'

'Commeal' was unexpected. Cy Happy, the hybridizer, had been hand pollinating and selling show auricula seed for a few years, but had stopped in the early 1970s. Some leftover seed in the refrigerator, which had probably been there for a while, turned up this handsome and robust edged auricula. It's hard to call it a grey-edged, because the meal, of which there is a liberal dusting, has a distinctly yellow cast.

"That's why I called it 'Commeal'," Cy said.

The pollen parents were whatever edged show auriculas Cy had in his collection at the time. The collection in the late 1960s probably included some edged auricula seedlings grown from English seed from Haysom. Cy won the Bamford Trophy with one of these seedlings in 1955. Mrs. Rae Selling Berry's white-edged 'Snow Lady' was in his collection, as were some named green and grey edged auriculas from England obtained through Frank Michaud of Alpenglow Nursery in Vancouver, B.C.

The pollen parents probably did not include Peter Klein's green edged, because it is

Plant Profiles continued

such a shy pollen producer. And they didn't include auriculas from the Ireland trip in 1974, because it was grown before then.

'Cornmeal' makes offsets generously, and produces filled flower stalks without too much extra care and attention. Cy still has it in his cold frame, and it is also grown in Victoria for over 10 years.

'MARY ZACH'

Ivanel Agee did a lot of hybridizing of both primroses and auriculas. She was looking for yellow self show auriculas, and with Mary Zach, she got them.

Ivie came to the primrose shows with #3 and #4 yellow self auriculas. Both were prize winners, but #3 was better. She named it for her friend Mary Zach.

The pip is flat with excellent proportions. The color is a clear bright yellow. The plant is heavily mealed. It reliably makes some offsets each year. 'Mary Zach' is still grown in the Portland area and also in the Seattle-Tacoma area by Herb Dickson and others.

'JULIE JACK'

The *Primula juliae* hybrid 'Julie Jack' or 'J. J.' as it is affectionately known, is one of the most handsome and reliable Julie primroses to come out of hybridist's hands in the Pacific Northwest. As was mentioned in the Peter Klein article, 'J. J.' was one of the products of Peter's program of hybridizing double *P. X Julianas*.

In this case the flower wasn't double, but it had the characteristic ruff of leaf tissue surrounding the flower that from Elizabethan times has identified the Jack-in-the-Green form. Much the same dark magenta color as 'Wanda,' a Julie known worldwide from the early part of the century, 'Julie Jack' is now considered by some to be a more vigorous grower.

It has the same mat-forming habit of all *P. juliae* progeny with the creeping rootstalk gene and will produce an attractive patch of low growing dark green leaves in a short time. Add to this the generous quantity of flowers produced each spring, and you have a plant worthy of wider recognition.

'Julie Jack' is grown throughout the Pacific Northwest, and will occasionally turn up in nurseries. There is an interesting story of a sister plant to 'Julie Jack' by Herb Dickson in the 1984 spring issue of the quarterly.

'FEATHERS' PRIMROSE

Peter Atkinson was mentioned in the spring 1991 issue of *Primroses*. His wonderful old primrose anomalies look like plants from 16th century prints. One in particular, the 'Feathers' or 'Shags' primrose was described by Bernard Smith in the *Auricula and Primula Society* (Southern Section) *Yearbook* in 1984, as "a polyanthus with a calyx of leaf formation, but with the corolla shaped into long, narrow petals." Thought to be extinct, something very like this description has been re-created by Peter.

The whole family of anomalies started with a ragged, white acaulis that had Jack-in-the-Green tendencies. This was crossed with a hose-in-hose Juliana, of a most unattractive,

WHITE PRIMULA PETER KLEIN'

Fred and Helen Clarke that lived in Tacoma could not stop growing primroses and auriculas. They had *Primula X Juliana* hybrids, all the old named varieties, laid out in rows as if they were lettuces in the vegetable garden. Besides Julies, they grew some of the species, and Helen Clarke sometimes hybridized these.

One of the primula species she grew was *P. 'Peter Klein'*, the cross between *P. clarkei* and *P. rosea* 'Delight,' the improved variety that had larger, darker pink flowers than the species. Helen back-crossed *P. 'Peter Klein'* to *P. clarkei*, and among the seedlings there were a few plants with pure white flowers.

This cross that results in white *P. 'Peter Klein'* is reliable and can be made by anyone. The recessive gene for some albino plants will surface in a few of the progeny. And the larger flower size which is characteristic of *P. 'Peter Klein'* remains rather than reverting to the smaller flowers characteristic of *P. clarkei*.

PRIMULA 'PETER KLEIN'

This hybrid between *Primula rosea* and *P. clarkei* is an easier garden plant than either species.

The clear pink flowers are larger than those of *P. clarkei* and contrast well with the bright green, toothed foliage.

Peter Klein first crossed these two species. ❖



Fred and Helen Clarke in their garden.

faded purple color. The plants with feathery petals and sepals began to appear two or three generations later. The 'Feathers' in the color photograph is a clear white with shades of green and white on the sepals.

The 'Shag' is one of a group of interesting primrose anomalies. Also appearing are *Primula polyanthus* Jack-in-the-Greens with various widths of calyxes and Jackanapes-on-Horseback, which we understand to mean a Jack polyanthus that has small leaf forms at the base of the pedicel stems at the top of the polyanthus flower head. This is in addition to the ruffs around each flower.

The 'Franticke or foolish cowslip,' a Jackanapes-on-Horseback is the next goal that Peter is working towards. This has petal tissue color on the leaf tufts at the top of the pedicel. It would appear it is only a matter of time until Peter also has this unusual primrose recreated.

Primrose folk

by Cy Happy

My association with the primrose folk began in 1949 or 1950 at a Tacoma primrose show.

I met some of the growers and was wandering along the display tables. Suddenly there was an unforgettable primrose—a solid cushion of blue two feet across with a neat border of green leaves all around. The tag stated the grower was Howard Larkin, and all these years later he is still coming to meetings.

During the next few years I met other growers around the Pacific Northwest at meetings and shows. On trips to Portland, Oregon, I saw Florence and Lew Levy's nursery and converted barn home.

My personal impression of Florence was that she was a weaver of spells through her use of words, music and aura of growing things. A slender, attractive woman with long red hair, she could charm anyone even in her gardening clothes all spattered with mud.

Susan Worthington (later Watson), who died this October at age 84, was another slender, dynamic woman. Over several years she produced the **Pictorial Dictionary** of primulas while she was also editing the quarterly, a job she took over from Florence in 1951. Susan and Dale Worthington were active growers. Auricula Dale's Red is still around.

Mrs. Karnopp and Ella Torpen were keen auricula growers in Portland. Mrs. Torpen had a collection of English named-variety show auriculas.

Frank Michaud in New Westminster, B.C., was our main source of named show and alpine auriculas in those days. He had contacts in England who kept him supplied. Alpines were \$4 to \$5 and shows were \$8 to \$10 each in the 1950s.

No memories of APS would be complete without including Dean Collins, who edited the weekly Sunday garden supplement for the Portland Journal. He brought together people with similar gardening interests, resulting, among others, in the formation of APS.

Dean and Mrs. Rae Berry were the first honorary life members. Dean made gardening an exciting and intellectual pursuit.

Mrs. A.C.U. (Rae) Berry was an internationally known collector of rare and newly discovered plants, especially primulas. She subscribed to the collecting trips of the plant explorers, bought seeds and plants from all over the world, traveled in search of American primulas and, with helpers like Lou Roberts, grew what she had collected.

Her garden high on a hill over Portland was ideal. It offered a variety of exposures and excellent air circulation. Mrs. Berry was the focal point for Pacific Northwest primrosers for the first several decades of



Cyrus Happy III in his garden in 1957.

the existence of APS. I wonder what happened to her beautiful Spode plates depicting show and alpine auriculas.

Dr. Matthew Riddle of Portland, a highly respected medical researcher, devoted his spare time to producing miniature polyanthus. His best known plant was 'Red Riddle.' Does anyone still have it?

The push to produce double auriculas came from Denna Snuffer of Bay City, Oregon, and Ralph Balcom of Seattle.

Ralph started with a few plants that produced extra petals. He labeled all his better plants "D" plus some number. D-6, a lavender-pink bloom, was one of the first and is still grown. D-141 was his dominant double seed producer, a soft lavender-white.

When his record book ended, he was recording the D-500s. Many of his plants are still grown.

Denna Snuffer raised thousands of garden auriculas from many seed sources. The new seedlings would include a few showing some signs of doubling. These would then be included in the breeding program.

The doubles started coming about 1959. Denna came to the Seattle show with a white edged red and a white, camellia perfect.

The Balcoms, John and Win Shuman and a few others formed the Show Auricula Floriculturist group. Their goal was to hold to the standards set down for us by Dan Bamford, the Lancashire expert who gave us the Bamford Trophy. This old copper kettle had been an auricula trophy in

continued on page 36

Primrose Folk continued

Northern England for more than 100 years and has now been a trophy for almost 40 years in this country.

Almost 40 years ago John and Clara Skupen bought an old mill site located in the lower end of a gulch emptying into Puget Sound in Tacoma's north end. By themselves they cleared seven small streams, built ponds, trails, bridges and flower beds and moved mountains of rotting sawdust onto their beds and trails.

Plants loved it. Small economy-sized rhododendrons and azaleas grew to be giants. Clara tried candelabra primrose seed with great success.

P. japonica was superb. She rogued out the colors she did not like and spread seed of those she did. Her favorites were coral and copper shades. Much seed was washed downstream and added to the effect.

The Skupens' greatest talent was their ability to create vistas. On a hazy or cloudy day the garden was a photographer's paradise. Scene after scene was perfectly arranged—subdued background, brilliant foreground, reflections, carefully placed logs and rocks.

Early spring brought *denticulatas*, *julies* and *P. rosea*. By July stately *P. florindae* and *P. helodoxa* had taken over. This charming garden is now owned and maintained—but never could be as the Skupens did—by Tacoma's Metropolitan Park District.

Candelabras also were promoted by Maude Hannon of Portland. Her beautiful Pagoda strain is still one of the best.

In 1955 I asked Herb Dickson to be show chairman for the Tacoma club's first national show. The floor space was 50 by 200 feet—a big show—and we filled it with plants and a huge crowd.

Herb brought together all the elements that would make the show a smash hit. This is how he still is—full speed ahead. When Herb married Dorothy Stredicke, we had two of our very best under one roof. Besides a large collection of shrubs, trees and alpine plants, Herb continues to display a nice selection of exhibition auriculas. In recent years he has been putting vigor and color into garden auriculas with great success.

I've left out many of my old gardening pals—Fred and Helen Clarke, Thelma Nelson, Lee and Dorothy Campbell, Ivy and Orval Agee, Jim Menzies, Ruth Bartlett Huston, Wilbur Graves, Ross and Helen Willingham, Bob Putnam and others. What a great group of people and what great contributions all of them have made! ❖

A Look at the Ads

Advertisements that weave a history of the society through the decade.

Browsing through the quarterlies of the American Primrose Society published in the 1950s one comes across advertisements that weave a history of the society through the decade.

There's a tiny ad in the Winter 1951 issue that announces auriculas for sale by Peter Klein. A modest notice to fit the man who contributed so many fine plants to our heritage of primroses and auriculas in the Pacific Northwest.

The color break that led to clear pink polyanthus was the work of Linda Eickman, a nurse who took up hybridizing primroses in her retirement. The ad from the October 1953 issue shows Linda at work with her plants, and provides all readers of the *Quarterly* with the information that seed is available so that they, too, can grow the new pink polyanthus.

Florence Levy who remarried and became Florence Bellis is famous worldwide for her primrose hybrids. Sure enough, there in the July 1954 *Quarterly* is an ad for Silver Dollar polyanthus described in Florence's inimitable rich language: "Desert Sunset shaded, Coffee, Cocoa and Spice, striped and unstriped Victorians." As always, the descriptions themselves make you want to have the whole spectrum in your garden.

An interesting personal story lay behind the full page ads that appeared on the back cover of the *Quarterly* consistently through this whole decade. Blue Whale, "a garden product of sundried sphagnum moss enriched with dehydrated whale solubles, creating a rich organic mix," as the ad informs us, was from the Acme Peat Company owned by Jim Watson of Vancouver, B.C.

Susan Worthington, editor of the *Quarterly* until 1956 would have met Jim Watson during this time. By the early 1960s, she had divorced



BLUE WHALE *ca.*
SUNDRIED SPHAGNUM MOSS Enriched with
Dehydrated Whale Soluble — Whale Baleen
Whale Bone and Marine Marl
creating a rich Organic Compost

The Whale Soluble might be termed the Essence of the Whale and is immediately available to the plant

The Whale Baleen is equivalent to Horn and Hoof found so beneficial in famous English potting composts but with this difference: —
The Whale Baleen and Whale Bone have been thoroughly digested in their production which makes them more entirely available in less time than ground materials of this nature.

This Blue Whale compost is complete.

Keep moist when planting — use no fertilizer at any time.
Directions for Use on Folder and Bag.

Ask Your Garden Store or Nursery
ACME PEAT PRODUCTS LTD.

Blue Whale Ad from October 1953.

Dale Worthington, married Jim Watson and moved to Vancouver B.C. It was during this period that she was working on the *Pictorial Dictionary of the Cultivated Species of the Genus Primula*.

Another Canadian connection is the Canadian Primula and Alpine Society, whose notice appears in the Summer 1963 issue. This group was an affiliated member of the American Primrose Society in these years, but later became the Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia. Jim Watson was one of the founding members of the Canadian Society. And the third Canadian connection was Alpenglow Gardens, a nursery located just south of Vancouver, B.C. in New Westminster.

Ads continued

Frank Michaud had brought over from England named show and alpine auriculas, and was one of the few sources of named auriculas for growers in the Pacific Northwest all through the 1950s and 1960s.

Along with the auriculas, he had species primulas and many other fine alpine plants for sale in his nursery. His ads appeared regularly in the *Quarterly*, such as the one from the October 1953 issue listing named auriculas from England.

The joy of a gardening interest lies in growing and sharing the plants. As we can see from the ads in the quarterlies in earlier times, there were many active members growing and sharing primula and auricula plants and seeds.

There are still a few active members doing this important task today and they are to be



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* CROWN PINK

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Plentiful harvest of best MAJESTIC
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Folder

Linda A. Eickman
211 E. Sheridan Street
Newberg, Oregon

* As pictured on the covers of the
1953 A.P.S. Yearbook.



The ad for pink primroses.

commended and encouraged. And, of course, every American Primrose Society member can support the society and the member growers by developing and enriching their own interest and sharing their enthusiasm with others.

Keep watching the ads in the back of the quarterly, but more than that, take time to write to the authors of articles that are of special interest to you. Or grow a few extra plants of primroses from seed — those unique ones, for which our society is so well known — not the bedding variety available from the local supermarket. You'll be pleased with the satisfaction and benefits that will return to you from this worthwhile occupation. ❖

TREASURE FROM ENGLAND — SHOW AURICULAS

We have for fall and spring delivery the following Show Auriculas which are amongst the best England has to offer, most of them had the highest awards at the London and Manchester Shows.

DEERLEAF, yellow self FLORENCE W. MICHIE, green edge GLEN DOBE, crimson self S. G. BOLDEN, white edge HORNLEY, green edge GREY MONARCH, grey edge HURN, white edge LANGFORD, grey edge	MARCHWOOD, green edge N.W. MIDGLEY, white edge NINE, grey edge NORLEY, grey edge RHINEFIELD, grey edge RHINEFIELD, grey edge SLODEN, green edge SOMERLEY, green edge
---	---

ALPINE AURICULAS

ARGON, plum shaded red, white centre DOWNTON, crimson shaded buff, acid centre FORESTER, rich maroon crimson, acid centre PETERLE, pink blue, white centre GOLDFINCH, rich mahogany, acid centre GORDON DUGLAS, deep violet blue, white centre WYNDOL, crimson maroon, acid centre WYNDOL, white centre	JANET GAY, white centre JOY, velvety reddish crimson, white centre KINGFIP, rich crimson shaded brown, acid centre MAJOR, rich maroon, white centre SEARCHLIGHT, plum shading to light blue WYNDOL, white centre
--	---

Our collection contains over 80 varieties, unfortunately some are very slow sending offsets and only a small quantity is available for distribution. Besides these named varieties we have a large quantity of two years old seedlings from the above as well as our De Luxe strain of Garden Auriculas, Alpine primulas and Primroses.

Many treasures are in our list, Primulas, Alpine plants, Azaleas, Heathers and Dwarf Shrubs. This list is free for the asking.

ALPENGLOW GARDENS — MICHAUD & COMPANY
 1504 Trans-Canada Highway, R.R. 10, New Westminster, B. C.
 Only 17 Miles from the Border at Blaine, Washington

A tempting list of auriculas from Alpenglow in 1953.

Thousands of packets of fresh seed of

*Barnhaven's Famous
Silver Dollar Polyanthus*

are being sent on advance order to every area in the United States; to Canada, England, Scotland, New Zealand, Australia, Chile and Peru.

The largest crop of the most beautiful primroses yet originated to surpass the plants winning the Blue Ribbon for Mr. E. J. B. Kidney in the R.H.S. Hall, London, this spring.

Brilliant new Pinks and Desert Sunset shades.
 Light, Medium and Bright Navy Blues
 Coffee, Cocoa and other Spice shades
 Striped and Unstriped Victorians
 Whites and Yellows measuring up to 3"
 Vivid new Grand Canyon shades, Kwan Yin, Cowichan, Indian Reds.

\$1 per pkt.; 6/\$5 with complete seeding leaflet.
 Informative, illustrated Catalog upon request.

BARNHAVEN Gresham, Oregon

Barnhaven nursery's offerings in 1954.



From the Mailbox

Letters from our readers

August 2, 1991

... I have just returned from a trip to the Big Horns — three weeks, actually — and we had such a good time. Managed to find *Primula parryi* in full bloom in the most unlikely place or so I thought.

Saw so many other really great plants — especially the tiny *Clematis tenuiloba* — what a sweetie! Took a picture and just drool whenever I look at it. The seed, if you can ever get any, will never germinate, like most clematis. Usually it needs a cold period, a warm one and another a cold one. Who knows — seed have a mind of their own....

Sincerely,

Karen Schellinger
Avon MN

October 3, 1991

Reading the *Primroses* magazine for Summer 1991, I was very interested to read the article about Peter Atkinson and his next challenge being to produce a double gold laced polyanthus.

Three years ago I bought a packet of gold-laced seed from Barnhaven and was lucky enough to get a double among my seedlings. In the autumn I split the plant and last year I had three plants, which flowered well. Unfortunately, I never thought to take a photograph when it was in bloom, but hopefully I shall rectify that in 1992. I am keeping my fingers crossed.

My back garden is approximately 27 meters long and 11 meters wide and is laid down entirely to alpines and dwarf conifers which are my passion, along with primroses and dwarf irises. I have quite a large collection of double primroses and, as I am not into technical hybridizing, I planted the double primroses around the ordinary gold and silver laced polyanthus and hope they will have cross-pollinated. I am waiting for about 70 seedlings to flower in the spring. I feel this is an extremely interesting part of gardening and raising seed — not knowing what will appear....

Yours sincerely,

Brian Davis
Walsall, West Midlands - England



Round Robin

"Join a Round Robin, exchange ideas and information, become friends..."

So how do you join a Round Robin? Just write to Elizabeth van Sickle, at the address below. Its unlikely you'll get to join one of the highly successful ones now on their rounds, but Elizabeth will match new applicants for Robins with others sharing your interests, and you can start your own successful APS Round Robin.

Send your letters to: Elizabeth van Sickle
654 Marine Drive
Sequim, WA 98382

From the Seed Exchange...

Members share their knowledge

I am excited this year to be able to offer through the Seed Exchange some seed of *Primula incana* of the Farinose Section. It has not been offered for many years.

Very little is said in Kris Fenderson's book *A Synoptic Guide to the Genus Primula* about *Primula incana* but there was quite a bit of information in the *Pictorial Dictionary*.

Several years ago Larry Bailey wrote an article in the quarterly voicing his concern about the lack of care in gathering seed and plants from their natural habitat. He felt we would lose these wild primula in years to come through carelessness and greed today. I know that in the



Primula incana.
Photo by S. Cunningham

Wallowa Mountains in Oregon there is a fantastic patch of *P. cusickiana* which grows and blooms but because of the difficulty of finding the rugged location, we will never have the pleasure of seeing it.

The same is true of *Primula incana*. Mistreatment, as referred to by Susan Watson and Rae Selling Berry in the *Dictionary*, where they tell of plants ploughed under by horses' hooves and also munched as breakfast by these same animals, has left us with very few plants in their native homes.

Now we find a dedicated person — Shan Cunningham in Minot, North Dakota — who has discovered a colony of *Primula incana* in Burke County, N.D. Thanks to him, the colony is being protected and studied.

I asked his permission and enclosing excerpts from his letter, both so you may appreciate his efforts and also read his recommendations on germinating seed and growing the plants. It is a real treat to discover individuals who realize the value of protecting our native plants and who take the time and energy to do it. Thanks, Shan. ❖

Candy Strickland
Seed Exchange Coordinator

To the Seed Exchange:

Find enclosed the seed of *Primula incana*, native to a few isolated locations in the northern Great Plains. A relic of the wetter post-glacial period when much of North Dakota was covered in spruce forest, *Primula incana* now persists along the shoreline of at least one alkali lake in Burke County, North Dakota. At present, this colony of several hundred plants is the only known population in the state.

I had the good fortune to discover this site in 1986. Since then I have been involved in the effort to both protect and study the population. Bringing the plant into cultivation is one of the goals of this effort.

Primula incana is hardy in USDA Zone 2 without reliable snow cover and is tolerant of full sun if the moisture supply is adequate. Its native soil is very sandy loam with a good organic content. The alkali tolerance of *Primula incana* has allowed the plant to colonize an otherwise rather barren location. In the garden it does well in soils of neutral Ph.

The seed from this population absolutely requires cool, moist stratification at 32-40 degrees for a period of 90 days. Any period of time shorter than 90 days has produced partial and erratic seed germination. Seed sown outdoors has continued to germinate after three years.

Shan Cunningham



A Reminiscence of the Seed Exchange

For many years, Ross and Helen Willingham put out the seed exchange list and mailed out seeds faithfully every spring. The accompanying photograph shows them hard at work.

News from the Chapters

Eastside

A potluck picnic was held at Don and Mary Keefe's on July 26, 1991. Wedding news: Don and Mary were married on June 30. A report from the board meeting, potluck picnic and plant sale at Herb Dickson's was made by Thea Oakley.

Don and Mary had more than 100 primulas in bloom at the time of the picnic. Most were members of the vernaes section, plus a few candelabras, *Primula capitata mooreana*, *P. denticulata* and *P. vialii*. There is a report on the picnic by Barbara Flynn, below.

The regular September meeting and a harvest dinner, another potluck event was held on September 9.

There was a special combined Washington State/ Seattle/ Eastside Chapter meeting held in Renton on September 13. Jay Lunn, treasurer of the American Primrose Society, gave a talk and presented slides on his trips searching for native primulas growing in their natural habitats in the western United States.

Seattle

The Seattle Chapter was also invited to the potluck picnic at Don and Mary Keefe's, as well as to the joint meeting on September 13 featuring Jay Lunn.

At the upcoming meeting on October 17 Roy Preston will talk on the indoor primulas, the Obconicas.

Washington State Chapter

The last meeting before the summer, held on June 14 featured a super program by Darlene Heller on *Primula capitata mooreana*. The plant is a native of northern India and comes in all shades of purple. It was used by Persian carpet weavers as a stylized pattern in their

carpets. Darlene said it will cross with *Primula denticulata*, and the resulting plants will bloom in the summer. Good questions indicated lots of interest from the audience.

The Washington Chapter also attended the joint meeting to hear Jay Lunn speak on native American primulas.

Jay's slides were superb and his presentation was exceptionally interesting. Native species found in Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon and California were all discussed and shown in their native habitat. Breathtaking scenery gave us a flavor of the uninhabited environment where these American jewels of the primrose family are found.

Tacoma Chapter

The September program was a presentation on pentstemon by Betty Davenport. The October meeting was a talk on grapes by Dave Johnson. Tips on getting primroses through the winter were also shared.

Members from the Tacoma Chapter were also encouraged to attend Jay's special lecture on North American primulas.

Doretta Klaber

Upcoming events include a Primrose Sowing Workshop in February. May will be garden tours to see primroses in bloom. June is the annual meeting. Interest has been expressed in the Julianas (*Primula X pruhonica*). If anyone has any to exchange, please contact Anita Kister.

Members are encouraged to attend the symposium *Primula Worldwide* in Portland. (West coast APS members would most certainly like to meet any Doretta Klaber Chapter members who could attend. A warm welcome is extended. Editor)

Vickie Sauer of Primrose Lane Nursery

by Barbara Flynn

Vickie Sauer and her husband Don make their home in Renton, Washington, with daughter Dianne and grandson Damon, daughter-in-law Teresa and grandson Bruce, plus four chihuahuas and two cats. They have five other grandchildren, but lost their son Bruce in a tragic accident several years ago. They have lived here for seventeen years. Vickie's love of primroses goes back a lot farther.

When her five children were quite small, the family moved to a house in Oregon with an overgrown yard. The children were exploring and found a stunning little lavender flower. Neither they nor Vickie knew what it was at that time and thought they had found a really rare plant. From a neighbor they found it was a primula. Vickie cared for it and divided it and soon had quantities of the little plant. In sharing it she met other plant people in the Eugene area and joined the local Primrose Society.

This was the turning point for Vickie. She found out about the seed exchange and went mad! She started to correspond with other enthusiasts, including Doretta Klaber and Ross and Helen Willingham. From these generous people she learned how to get maximum germination of her precious seeds, how to grow them, then how to hybridize and, eventually, how to show them. She later became an accredited judge.

In 1975 Vickie moved to Renton. This was especially meaningful to her as she could

now meet the Willinghams with whom she had been corresponding. She helped them with the seed exchange for several years and built up a stock of primulas which became the foundation for her Primrose Lane Nursery. The Scottish Rock Garden Club was also a grand source of seed.

Vickie's favorite primulas are the Julies and Cowichans, but she has grown all sorts at some time or other. Her best hybrids came from a Gold Laced crossed with a dark red Cowichan. The offspring were a brilliant hot pink now, unfortunately, lost. Her toughest plant is a marginata obtained many years ago from the Agees and still going strong. Vickie also introduced 'Early Girl' which she saw in Earl Welch's garden and gave him a name for it.

Vickie is a talented watercolor artist. However, she has gone into a new field and has closed her nursery. This job, combined with arthritis, makes it difficult to do everything she would like, but she still enjoys the friendships primulas have brought her—friendships that glow as brightly as the flowers she loves. ❖

Membership renewals
are due! See page 46.

Notes from the Editor

Primula X Juliana Enthusiasts

Following Don Keefe's article in the 1991 spring issue of the quarterly, Don has had four letters expressing an interest in plant swaps. They range from all over the country: two from Alaska, one from the midwest and one from the east coast. Don says he's been so busy answering letters, swapping plants and getting married that he's tuckered out.

Good Luck at the Book Sales

Don't give up. You, too, may find a primrose book treasure at one of the book sales when you are least expecting it. A member has had great good luck this last year. At an arboretum sale that included used books she was fortunate enough to find K. C. Corsar's *Primulas in the Garden*, a classic British work for the amateur grower dating from the 1940s. Imagine her delight when she opened the front cover and found the fly leaf with the former owner's name inscribed: Florence Levy, Gresham, Oregon.

Later, in the summer on a trip to Vancouver, B.C. she found a copy of Doretta Klaber's book *Primroses and Spring* in a second-hand book store there.

So keep a sharp look out at any of the places where used books turn up. You can never have too many books on primroses.

Jackanapes-on-Horseback in Color

A quick word with Peter Atkinson at the lecture by Jay Lunn brings us the latest update: Peter is working on Jackanapes-on-Horseback, but with flower petal color on the leaves that appear at the top of the flower stalk or pedicle. No doubt there is a fancy name for this particular variety of the old English primrose, but we'll be satisfied if we can even see one, without knowing its name. Good luck, Peter.

Primula marginata Collection

There has always been an excellent collection of *Primula marginata* in Victoria. The owner is Albert de Mezey, a long time member of the Vancouver Rock and Alpine Garden Society.

Talking to Albert the other day, I asked him where the plants originated. He grew them from seed, he said. And where did the seed come from? From the American Rock Garden Society seed exchange. The donor was Mrs. Rae Selling Berry, from Portland. Isn't that an interesting coincidence?

Albert remembers getting the seed in the 1950s and grew about eight different varieties of *marginata*, which are still there tucked in among the rocks in a tall stone north-facing wall on the side of a dell in his garden.

Sakurasoh on the Stage

Here's an idea. Imagine having a collection of named *Primula seiboldii*, known in Japan as Sakurasoh. And then imagine putting them on small formal staging to display them to best advantage. Truly an achievement.

Izetta Renton tells me she imported named varieties of *P. seiboldii* from Japan some years ago, and still has a few. Peter Atkinson is also interested in making this kind of collection. Do we have a special interest group in the making?

Certainly the visit by Mr. Kooichi Oogaki and Mr. Tsuneo Torii from Japan to the symposium *Primula Worldwide* in Portland next spring will present a unique opportunity to find out more information about Sakurasoh directly from the experts.

News from England

The Society is now receiving the yearbooks and newsletter of the Auricula and Primula Societies in England. The Summer newsletter of the Midland and West Section reports that the

annual meeting in the fall will be held in conjunction with a symposium where Derek Telford will speak on alpine auriculas and Alan Edmondson will give an illustrated talk on primulas. There will also be a plant sale. Wouldn't we give anything to be there!

The report of the 1991 shows indicates they were superb, due in part to more normal spring weather. A superb array of *P. allionii* in all its forms and hybrids was presented.

There is also news of two books written by members of the British Society, one on auriculas and one on primulas, that have run into difficulty as they reached the stage of publication. A sad story, when one considers the anticipated calibre of these works, given the effort and knowledge of the authors. However, the Society plans to do something about it. We will watch for further developments in the next newsletter.

A Suitcase Full of Seeds

Just had a brief word with June Skidmore, back from her trip to England, carrying a suitcase full of fresh primula and alpine garden seed. As the North American agent for Field House Alpines in Nottinghamshire, and a friend of Valerie Woolley, one of the partners of the nursery, June now has lots of seed to fill North American orders. Both of these primula enthusiasts are American Primrose Society members. If you don't have a list, you can write to June. Her address is in the list of Officers inside the back cover.

Some Theories Behind Hybridizing Primula

Are you interested in creating some of your own primula seed by hand pollinating some of your choice plants? John Kerridge has alerted me to a very concise but useful treatise on the subject. It's in the Shire publication *Primulas of the British Isles* by John Richards.

There is information on the hybrids created in the wild, and how these have led to some of our garden hybrids. The theories of heterostyly

(that is thrums and pins to the rest of us) are explained, with results of studies to show why crosses of pins and thrums, as opposed to thrums and thrums, will result in stronger plants. This information could save you a number of generations of weak seedlings.

You can obtain a list of Shire Publications by writing to them: Shire Publications Ltd., Cromwell House, Church Street, Princes Risborough, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP17 9AJ, United Kingdom.

If We've Missed Anyone...

In doing an issue of remembrances there are bound to be important people who were missed. I apologize. But if your memory is twiggled by reminiscences here and you recall another good story or someone you think should be mentioned, please take the time to write down your thoughts and send them to me. They can be included in the next issue. ❖

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American Primrose Society

Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of the American Primrose Society met on July 13, 1991 at Herb Dickson's home in Chehalis. It was held in conjunction with the summer picnic.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report were presented. There are funds donated for the revision of the pictorial dictionary. There is a question of the disposition of these funds. The issue was put on the agenda for the October meeting.

Primula Note Cards for the Symposium

John Kerridge showed some paintings done by Mary Comber-Miles of primroses and auriculas. Two of these will be printed as note cards and will be available at the Symposium.

Seed Exchange

The annual statement and the budget for the Seed Exchange were distributed. Candy Strickland reported that there would be a loss if the companion plants seed was not included. These seeds were eliminated from the seed exchange at the last board meeting. The issue was discussed but no action was taken.

Membership Drive

Two board members raised the question, "How do we attract new members, particularly young people?" No action was taken.

Judging

At this year's national show, a controversy arose concerning the award of the Banford Trophy. The consensus was that a judging symposium was needed to clarify the requirements for such trophies.

Quarterly

The editor is proposing to do the fall issue as a 50th anniversary issue which will include color photographs. The board agreed to leave decision-making on this issue to Maedythe Martin. Flip Fenili agreed to assist her by soliciting corporate sponsors for funds to help meet the additional expenses of a color issue.

1992 Dues Reminder

1992 membership renewals are due November 15th. The annual rate for both domestic and foreign membership, individual or household, is \$15.00 U.S. per year (\$16.00 for renewals postmarked after January 1st); \$40.00 for three years; or \$200.00 for an individual life membership. Membership is based upon the calendar year. The year your membership expires is shown in the upper right-hand corner of the address label affixed to the envelope used to mail your quarterly 'Primroses.'

We prefer that foreign members make payment in the form of an international money order. However, payment may be made by personal check in currencies of Australia, Austria, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland. Checks payable from foreign funds should be in an amount based upon the current exchange rate, plus five per cent.

Make checks payable to the American Primrose Society and mail to:

Jay G. Lunn, Treasurer
6620 N.W. 271st Ave.
Hillsboro, OR 97124
U.S.A.

Memorial

(Belated acknowledgement)

**Pictorial Dictionary Fund
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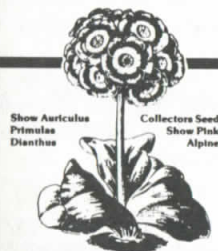


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 individual life membership. Submit payment to
 the Treasurer. Membership renewals are due
 November 15th and are delinquent at the first of
 the year.

Membership includes a subscription to the
 Quarterly *Primroses*, seed exchange privileges,
 slide library privileges and the opportunity to
 join a Round Robin.

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Back issues of the quarterly are available from
 the secretary.

Manuscripts for publication in the Quarterly are
 invited from members and other gardening
 experts, although there is no payment. Please
 include black and white photographs if possible.
 Send articles directly to the Editor, Maedythe
 Martin, 951 Joan Cres., Victoria, B.C., Canada
 V8S 3L3

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Register Today!

Who hasn't been delighted on a dreary spring morning to discover the season's first primula bloom peeking up from behind a rock or fern? Now we have an excuse to dream of another wonderful year of gardening! Multiply this emotion a thousandfold, and you have an idea of what to expect from attending "Primula Worldwide," the international symposium taking place April 10-12, 1992. Please register early so you won't miss this unique opportunity.

Primula enthusiasts of all levels of gardening expertise will converge on the Greenwood Inn in Portland. That will be base for informative presentations, national APS flower show, garden tours, book sales, exhibits, banquets and breakfasts. Old and new primula species and cultivars will be discussed. Discoveries will be highlighted and lost forms revisited. Speakers will present techniques for growing and hybridizing—divulging their professional secrets.

When you read your registration brochure, you will notice the quality and expertise of keynote speakers and clinic leaders and the broad spectrum of topics to be covered. Symposium participants will receive a whole new perspective on the use of primulas and their companion plants in the garden.

More than 8,000 registration brochures have been sent worldwide, and registration will be on a first come, first served basis. Please plan now to participate in the symposium—and all of its activities—to make new friends and learn together.

**Greg Becker,
 Conference Chairman**

50th Anniversary Issue

Primroses

Fall 1991
Volume 49, No. 4

Cover Dedication
IN MEMORY OF BRIAN SKIDMORE
1928 TO 1990.

Primula marginata, the cover photograph of this special anniversary issue was one of Brian Skidmore's favorites of all the primula and auricula that he grew.

Brian, treasurer of the American Primrose Society from 1983 to 1989, is sadly missed by all his friends in the Society.

June Skidmore has donated funds in his memory for the color photograph on the cover of this keepsake edition of the Society's quarterly bulletin. The American Primrose Society acknowledges June for this thoughtful commemoration.

