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DEVOTED TO THE SHELTERED GARDENS

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This Society shall be conducted on a non-profit basis, and its purpose shall be to stimulate interest in begonias and shade-loving plants; to encourage the introduction and development of new types of begonias and related plants; to gather and publish information in regard to the kinds, propagation and culture of begonias and other shade-loving plants, and to issue a bulletin which shall be mailed to all members in good standing.

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Begonias at Fincham

By L. MAURICE MASON

TO WRITE a comparatively short article on the *Begonias at Fincham* is not easy as there are many of them and it would be difficult to know what to omit or what to describe. They are a family which as a whole are not widely cultivated in this country as they need certain amount of heat in winter and of course glasshouse protection for most months of the year. The writer became interested in them many years ago and decided to get together as many of the wild species as it was possible to obtain. The more he acquired the more surprised he was at their diversity and their tremendous distribution throughout the world.

We all of course have our favorite plants and probably of them all, the hybrid known as *Begonia* "Arthur Mallet" with its brilliant purple leaf and rich and compact habit, would make it outstanding in any collection. Again *B. "Digswelliana"* with its orange flowers, waxy and intense in color, and its graceful form and habit, appeal to everyone who sees it in February. *B. manicata*, with its various forms, is another charming plant robust and stout and tolerant of the draughts which will invade its house. *B. imperialis* and its form *B. imperialis smaragdina* are old conservatory plants which are seldom seen nowadays but are well worth the care and little extra attention which they demand if they are to succeed as they should. Another hybrid known as *B. "Corbeille de Feu"* has long been grown here and while its parentage must be doubtful there is obviously a lot of *B. fuchsoides* blood in it, but it is perhaps a more robust grower than its parent and is occasionally used as a bedding plant here for the summer months. Space in our greenhouses is precious and the many rexes which we have are now planted beneath the staging in a mixture of ashes, peat and loam, where they appear quite happy and flourish well in their rather dark surroundings. The writer's favorite is undoubtedly *B. "Bettina Rothschild,"* whose young leaves with the brilliant red hairs on them cause an immediate sensation when shown to someone who has never seen them before. We must have here in all, I suppose, sixty or seventy begonia rex hybrids, many of which have originated from America. They are all lovely plants and all attractive in one way or another but I some times think that there must be a little doubt

about their names which certainly do not correspond with many which have been grown in England for many years. Perhaps the gem of our collection is one which is known as the *B. "Iron Cross"* which describes it well as it has a black cross on a green background on its broad bronze and hairy leaves. The history and origin of this plant have not been determined yet, but it was given to the writer in Singapore some years ago from the Botanic Garden there and the authorities appear to have no knowledge as to where it had been originally obtained. Taken to the Ghent Floraries in 1955, it was given the award for the best new plant in the show not hitherto exhibited. It is hard to conceive of a higher honor for a begonia and there is little doubt that this plant thoroughly deserved it. Since then it has been distributed widely and promises to become one of the best known foliage begonias in this country.

We grow none of the large flowered tuberous hybrids, as although they are very lovely plants they have not the appeal of many of the species. There is no doubt that there are as many oddities among the begonias as any other family of flowers and possibly the *Begonia caroliniaefolia*, which we now have as a small tree, is one of the oddest. Our biggest plant is a yard high and has a trunk perhaps an inch and a half to two inches thick, a striking plant rather than lovely but one which should be in any representative collection. Another fine foliage begonia is *B. serratifolia* which was collected in New Guinea three years ago and given an Award of Merit by the Royal Horticultural Society. A narrow leaf variety with raised pink pustular spots on its leaves with its dense habit it is indeed a striking and easy plant to grow. Another good New Guinea species somewhat resembles *B. sanguinea* but the leaves are not quite so fleshy and possibly a rather richer color. So far this plant appears to be undescribed. From a waterfall in Madagascar came another charming begonia with small pink flowers and a neat habit and it must be one of very many which are to be found in that most interesting island.

The writer seems to have collected or brought together begonias from many parts of the world apart from those he has already mentioned and another very striking plant is

B. daedalea, which came from Costa Rica. This has a bright green leaf with distinct, bronze markings on it and has made a pleasing pot plant and amenable to cultivation under our conditions here. A few have come from Africa almost all rhizomatous species. We still have a few other species of begonias from Southern Africa which are mainly bulbous but on the whole these are dull, flowers being smallish, greeny white and very unexciting.

Our method of cultivation is, with the exception of the rex begonias, to keep all the plants in pots and these are usually repotted annually about the middle of January. We use a standard John Innes compost and always endeavor to under pot rather than over pot the plants as we find that they are less likely to take harm by being over watered. The minimum temperature to which they are subjected is perhaps forty-five degrees Fahrenheit and the maximum during the summer months may be up to one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. The house is lightly shaded about the beginning of May and a second coat is usually applied in June. We find that while the plants will stand being very dry in the summer they will not stand being sodden in the winter when the temperatures are low. The first sign of ill health is invariably noticed when leaves begin to fall off the plant which is not happy. If this can be moved to a rather warmer and drier house, it will usually recover.

We still receive begonias from all parts of the world fairly frequently and our two most recent acquisitions have been *B. prismatocarpa*, which is a jewel with orange flowers from Africa, and an un-named species collected by Kingdom Ward near the Moulmein River. This latter promises to make a most lovely foliage plant, and as it was collected at a fairly high altitude should not require very much heat for the winter.

Begonia sutherlandi, which is bulbous from South Africa, seeds itself freely in our begonia house and the pale orange flowers make a very pretty sight under the benching. There is only one hardy begonia at Fincham and that is *B. evansiana*, which has been growing outside for some years. It only flowers rather sparsely under these conditions but indoors and again under the benches is quite attractive and provided it is kept within bounds it is worth its place. Another begonia which we received from America some years ago under the name of Mexican Rockery has proved to be hardy in the west of England and has indeed survived the winter in an unheated greenhouse here. This is no doubt because under these

conditions it is deciduous and goes completely dormant and does not start to grow again until late April or early May. One or two begonias we have to keep in a very warm house where we try not to let the temperature drop below fifty-five and amongst these, *B. "Druryi"* is one of the more appealing, as its almost round, shining, silvery pink leaf is indeed lovely.

As everyone interested in the family knows propagation of begonias is comparatively easy and we endeavor every year to root a batch of plants which are the most uncommon or the most interesting. As a result we have been able to send them to many parts of the world and have received other most interesting ones in exchange. We do not often save seed as with all the plants growing together cross pollination is so likely to occur that the resulting seedlings may not resemble their parents in any way.

—B—

NOTES ON MASON ARTICLE

Mr. Mason's list of his begonia collection sent to the Research Department contained 416 named begonias, a large number of them being species. The rex *Begonia* "Bettina Rothschild" is better known in this country as *B. "Fire-flush."* Mexican Rockery Begonia is *B. schulziana* (see *The Begonian*, 1950, page 36). *B. "Druryi"* Mr. Mason obtained on a trip to Singapore. *B. "Druryi,"* developed by Constance Bower, originating in San Diego, Calif., has been sent to Mr. Mason by the A.B.S. for comparison.

To date Mr. Mason has sent the A.B.S. five begonia plants and they are being grown on and will be established in our Identification Garden for future reference. Through the thoughtful kindness of Mr. Mason perhaps this will be a means of identifying some of our begonias with names unknown. In John Thieben's care they will become specimen plants. We thank Mr. Mason for his contribution and John for his devoted time.

SYLVIA B. LEATHERMAN
Research Director

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

from the

GLENDALE BRANCH

Bulbs for the Shade Garden

By J. N. GIRIDLIAN, Arcadia, Calif.

Amarcrinum

(FRONT COVER PICTURE)

IN THE previous two issues of *The Begonian* appeared articles on *Crinum Moorei* and *Brunsvigia rosea*, or *Amaryllis belladonna*. Both of these plants are native to South Africa, and have much in common, both being closely related members of the *Amaryllis* family. Their flowers are rather similar, they bloom at the same time, and their seeds are fruity although of great difference in size. On the other hand, from a horticultural point of view, both have their disadvantages which have not helped to endear them to the average gardener. The crinum does not take kindly to a sunny situation and it will have a tendency to go partially dormant during its blooming season if planted in the sun, and looking very unkempt. The *Brunsvigia rosea*, on the other hand, loses its leaves during the summer and leaves a vacant spot in the garden, and many persons do not think it is natural for flowers to protrude from the soil without any accompanying leaves.

These two being so similar in habit, it was only natural that someone should try to see if they would cross with each other. This cross was first successfully made in Europe and later in this country by Mr. Fred Howard of Howard & Smith, Montebello, Calif.

Mr. Howard was an avid amaryllis enthusiast and did much valuable work with the family. His effort proved successful and he came up with a group of hybrids which were known as "Amarcrinum Howardi." The name was obtained by combining the names of the two parent plants. From this group the best seedlings were selected and propagated. The stock is now very plentiful and may be obtained from any amaryllis specialist and most good nurseries in Southern California.

The new plant has many fine qualities which remedy the objections to the parent plants. It is very easy to grow from the deepest shade to the open sunlight, very tolerant of soil and water conditions, and has good, clean evergreen foliage. The flowers are similar to brunsvigia but of a uniform pink color, fragrant, and held high on a stiff, upright stem. Not only is it a sure bloomer, but blooms several times during the summer, and a well established mother bulb will throw consecutive flower spikes from

the middle of June to the end of November. This is surprising since both parents bloom only once a year.

The bulbs are large, of a good shape and multiply very rapidly forming large clumps and are very effective in the landscape. If propagation is wanted, the clump may be lifted and divided any time of the year, and the plants will keep right on growing as though nothing had happened.

The same cross may be made by anyone, and different colored brunsvigias may be used to obtain different colored hybrids. By using selected colors of the crinum and brunsvigia, a wide range of colors may be obtained, theoretically, since at the present time the range of color is very limited, being from white to rose. Since it will take only about four years to see the results of such a cross, it would be well worth trying.

Among such a colony of hybrids raised by someone in Southern California, Mr. Delkin of Arcadia found one which had smaller but more widely open flowers, and smaller bulbs. This one was named "Delkin's Find" and is now available. As may be expected, both of these hybrids are mules and are incapable of producing second generation plants. Perhaps this accounts for their very free blooming habits.

It would be fun to make a planting of all three of these in your garden in close proximity in order to show what happens when two plants are crossed with each other, an object lesson which will long be remembered by any plant enthusiast.

Greenhouse for Begonia Exhibit

THE GREENHOUSE to properly care for, display for the public, and identify begonias at the Los Angeles County and State Arboretum will become a reality if each member, branches and friends who love beautiful shade plants will send their donations to Howard Small, 3310 California St., Pasadena, Calif. Mr. Small will keep a record of each donation, which will be tax exempt to the donor.

The San Gabriel Valley Branch has donated \$100 to this project and individual donations from \$1 to \$25 have been received.

Is your Branch's name on the roster?

Has your name been recorded on this roster?

Scientific Hybridizing, Part V

Techniques of Plant Breeding

By MERLE NELSON, *Taxonomist*

IN NATURE the conditions of pollination is largely the work of insects or the wind, and a matter of chance. The plant breeder must exercise full control in artificial pollinations between two deliberately chosen parents. Complete records of these controlled pollinations must be kept so that the pedigree of any seedling can quickly be found and the inheritance of characters clearly followed.

Methods to prevent unwanted pollen from reaching the female flower are as follows:

1. *Bags.* Single flowers may be covered with a transparent paper bag such as cellophane. These are placed upon the flowers a few days prior to their opening.

2. *Cages.* For covering a whole plant, small wooden cages covered with muslin on the sides and glass or a glass substitute is used to cover the top for protection against water or rain.

3. *Isolation.* Flowers to be used for their pollen may be gathered in the bud stage and brought into a closed room where they can be open without fear of contamination by insects.

Whatever form of protection is adopted, it is important to see that all unwanted flowers are first removed from the plant. Flowers which have shed their pollen, or whose stigmas have been exposed to foreign pollen should never be used.

When employing the use of a bisexual flower, the stamens must be removed before the pollen is shed. The process of removing the stamens is called emasculation. The most satisfactory method is by the means of forceps. Forceps and fingers should both be sterilized in methylated spirits before starting emasculation and should be repeated as often as different plants are involved. The spirits should be wiped off and allowed to evaporate from instruments before emasculating, otherwise the delicate surface of the stigma may be damaged if touched by the strong spirit. Emasculation is most often done in the late bud stage. This means that in order to get to the stamens, the petals will have to be removed. After emasculation of a flower, it should immediately be covered to prevent contamination or desiccation of the stigmatic

surface. The stigma is not receptive until thirty to forty hours after emasculation. Pollination may be done immediately after emasculation if desired, to save time.

The transfer of pollen to the stigma may be done in several ways. The most direct method is dusting the pollen directly on to the stigma. The tip of the finger or a camel-hair brush may be used to transfer the pollen. The soft tip of a torn piece of blotting paper is most satisfactory, since a new piece may be employed for each pollination, thus avoiding the necessity for sterilizing.

The success or failure of a pollination depends on several factors. The use of old pollen should be avoided, as best results are obtained from pollen of freshly burst anthers. If the pollen parent is weak or starved, the pollen is liable to be ineffectual as pollen is more apt to be affected by the wrong cultural conditions than are the ovules. An overfed plant may be as poor or poorer pollen parent as an underfed plant. Thus a specimen plant may be a very poor pollen parent.

The effect of too high or low a temperature also may give failing results. The life of pollen varies immensely; some last not more than one day, while others will last several months. The longevity of pollen is considerably increased if the pollen is kept in perfectly dry air. It is thus possible to store pollen from one parent for a time until the other parent is ready. This is done by choosing anthers which are about to burst, and placing them in tissue covering and then into a corked receptacle in which calcium chloride has been placed. This substance rapidly absorbs moisture and makes the container almost moisture free.

It can not be impressed too much that it is desirable and advantageous to keep records at each stage of the process. The records need not be elaborate, they should be as simple as possible. The record should enable the pedigree of any seedling to be traced accurately. A record book giving the parents, date of pollination methods employed, later the success or failure of the pollination, the number of seeds set and the germination, etc., will ensure greater accuracy and possibly provide valuable information for future work.

Rex Begonias in the Deep South

By MRS. RUTH WALTZER, Sumter, S.C.

MY FIRST rex begonia was *B. "Adrien Schmidt"* brought with me as a leaf from Ohio in October 1951. August of 1951 I planted rex seed from the A.B.S. seed fund. Had many seedlings, but saved four plants. I sold two and the others have made good sized plants. One has the coloring of *B. "Husband's Favorite,"* the other is a helix leaf. The last one has been very slow, only now it has four mature leaves and one new leaf, mature leaves measuring 10" by 12". It bloomed last winter, the seed germinated and now I have several seedlings.

In 1953 I sent to Oregon for rex begonias and *B. "Versicolor."* It was one of the hottest and driest years I have ever known. The plants coming from the cool, coastal plains of Oregon could not acclimate themselves. But my three rexes that made the first summer are still with me, *B. "Pacific Sunset,"* *B. "Silversweet"* and *B. "Little Pet."*

Begonia "Pacific Sunset," *B. "Little Pet,"* and *B. "Pink Sheen"* along with my helix leaved seedling would not grow outdoors. They made lovely plants in a pit greenhouse where they stay winter and summer. *B. "Adrien Schmidt,"* *B. "Silversweet"* and my other A.B.S. seedling grow their best under dense shade during the summer months. The first three are rhizomatous; the last three are upright growing.

My best soil mixture is 3 parts leaf mold, 3 parts composted cotton hulls, 3 parts good sandy loam and 2 parts old chicken manure. Instead of broken crocks or stones for drainage in the pot, I use rotted pine logs. I fill the pot one third full of the log, the rest with the soil mix. When I take the plant out of the pot, I find the feeding roots are all through the rotted log. At the end of the first year I top dress with fresh chicken manure; this does not burn the plant, for it is not mixed with the soil and is dry most of the time.

I have found it best to cut a large rex or rhizomatous begonia leaf in wedges at the stem, cutting part of the stem with each wedge. These veins have more substance and will root easier than the outer veins of the leaf.

For sowing seed I use one part leaf mold and one part sandy loam sieved through window screen. This is put into plastic containers that have drainage holes in the bottom.

(Continued on Page 20)



Begonia Elizabeth Lockhart

By E. L. ARBUCKLE

MANY of you have in your gardens or lath-houses a member of the *Superba* family, but few have had the pleasure of one in bloom.

Begonia "Elizabeth Lockhart" has been tested in many localities over a period of years and has proven to be a prolific bloomer. This beautiful hybrid can rightfully take its place at the head of the *Superbas*. It has been erroneously called *Daisy I*. Marie Turner is the creator of this lovely plant which should be in every garden.

It is particularly adapted to outdoor culture requiring a semi-shady location. Branching well at the base, comes sturdy and upright; it grows to a height of three feet.

Leaves are triangular in appearance, the widest part three inches by a length of six inches. On more mature plants they grow even larger. The leaves are held on round petioles which hold them strongly erect. Top surface of the leaves is a beautiful jade green with a satiny sheen. Leaf edge with irregular points is slightly ruffled with a tiny hair line of red. On the reverse side, the green is flushed with red from the center which deepens as it reaches the edge. Veins are raised in clear relief giving added character to the plant.

It is a profuse bloomer producing pendulous clusters of dainty pink and white flowers.

—B—

NOMENCLATURE COMMITTEE

Working with Mr. H. M. Butterfield of the University of California, Director of the Nomenclature Committee, will be: Frederick J. Bedson, Mrs. Pearl Bauer, Mrs. May Drew, Mrs. Alva Graham, and Mrs. Emma M. Carleton.

ORCHIDS

By GLENN HIATT

Orchid Research, La Canada

THE MOST spectacular orchids that are given or received during the Christmas season can be maintained in excellent condition for flowerers next year. Each type of orchid was originally discovered in a different part of the world and thus requires slightly different growing conditions in the home environment.

The most well known orchid is the cattleya, which has been used in orchid corsages for many years. There are mauve or purple, white, white with colored lip, and yellow or bronze colored cattleyas, each with its own blooming period. Thus if a grower owned enough plants of the different varieties, it would be possible to have some plant in flower almost any time during the year. There are a few varieties that bloom during December having flowers that last on the plant from one to three weeks depending on the following conditions: While in bloom, the cattleya should be set any place in the room away from hot or cold drafts and watered only when the compost is almost dry, then soak thoroughly. After the flowers are finished or cut for corsage, the plant should be placed near an east or south window over a shallow container filled with gravel or other porous material. This material should be kept damp so that the evaporation will maintain a slightly higher humidity around the plant.

Cypripediums or lady-slipper orchids with the dark green foliage, bloom during December and January and continue in flower for three to six weeks in a reasonably cool location in the home. These plants should be kept quite damp at all times and can be shown off to best advantage in a pot cover bowl, which will also help to keep the compost moist. After flowering, the plant should be kept in subdued light until about March 1. At this time, the plant may be planted in a shady location near ferns or other shade loving plants where it can be kept reasonably cool and moist until about November or December when the new flower buds show. If the plant is left in the pot when planted, it will be very convenient to bring the plant back in the house when in flower.

The above directions for cypripediums also pertain to zygotepetalums.

Cymbidiums generally bloom most profusely in the spring but *Cymbidium* "Doreen"

The Turners' B. Penny

EACH plant genera has its admirers. With begonias, because of their large field, one may find a specimen that has appeal of a personal nature in every classification. Collectors of rhizomatous begonias will be happy to find *Begonia* "Penny." It has quiet beauty, grows lushly and adapts readily to new environments.

The plant has a medium size rhizome with many "eyes" very close together so that the petioles (stems) are crowded and the leaves overlap one another. This power plant (rhizome) is extremely powerful as it stores the necessary growing compounds to force out so many leaves on sturdy stems such a short distance apart. The petioles are pale green, dotted with red freckles that streak slightly to resemble dashes of color. This color is repeated only on the underside of the leaf a half inch from the margin. This time the amount of coloring is heavier; so heavy that it shows through to the upper side of the leaf in unsymmetrical splashes along the margin. The depth of color here is maroon.

Imagine this decoration and color on wavy light green leaves. Couple this feature with the almost rounded shape gently undulating, and you will immediately want this plant for your own. It is a steadfast and reliable grower too, so what more could you ask of a begonia?

For those of you who like to grow specimen plants to take to shows and win awards, look into the compactness of growth of *Begonia* "Penny." It is just as fine a plant to show in the front line of your garden beds.

Marie Turner, the hybridizer, chose "Penny" for its name. Those of you acquainted with her will instantly know that it was named for a dear friend, and only the most choice of all her hundreds of hybrids have this distinction.

The plant I am describing is growing in the ground in a wide bordered, well drained patio, in an area close to the mountains. The nights are sharp during the winter months, and the days hot and dry in summer. I have not yet seen this *Begonia* "Penny" in bloom, but according to all standards of botany, it should bloom in proportion to its abundant growth.

and a few others bloom during the Christmas season. In Southern California, cymbidiums will stand temperatures as low as twenty-six degrees and so may be grown in the garden

Begonia Odorata Alba

ONE OF the first begonias I collected is, in the form of its descendants, still one of my favorites because of its adaptability, its free blooming habit, and its fragrance. I have called it by many names: *B. odorata*, *B. "Odorata Alba," B. nitida* var. *odorata alba*, and *B. nitida* (because of its resemblance to Plate No. 4046 in Curtis' Botanical Magazine). Now I have gone back to *B. "Odorata Alba,"* after seeing a plant called *B. nitida*, similar, but not the same.

It is a tree-like plant, which rarely sends up more than one stalk from the ground, characteristically smooth and shiny in all its parts. The stems are light green in youth, with a purplish-red flush at the swollen nodes. Soon white flecks appear, which in time are raised from the smooth surface. In age, the stems become light brown, a little rough and woody.

The leaf stems are rosy, the color deepening as they join the blade. This sometimes shows red in the sinus. The leaf shape is round-ovate, with an abrupt point at the edge, some very tiny. The leaves are light green above, with slightly depressed veins, which are correspondingly raised from the paler under-surface.

The stipules are rather large, pale green, and shiny, but soon dry and drop, leaving a noticeable scar, which sometimes completely encircles the stem.

The inflorescence is a widely branching cyme, its stems pink, bearing roundish bracts at each fork. These are soon shed. In spite of the varietal name *alba*, the flowers are pale pink. The males have two heart shaped petals and two narrow, straplike ones. They may not open in the house. The female flowers show five long, narrowly oval petals, which tend to recurve in the daytime. They close at night. The three stigmas are spirals, rather short. The ovary has three wings, one larger and pinker than the other two. Two oval bracts lie flat on two sides of the ovary. This

either in pots or in the ground in a strong filtered light. The plants require constant moist soil and mild feeding during the growing season in the spring.

An orchid plant can be grown just as easily as many of our other garden or house plants and rewards the grower with long lasting flowers and an exciting hobby.

character, according to Mr. Everett of the New York Botanical Garden, sets this plant apart from the species, *Begonia nitida*. In addition to eye-appeal, these flowers have a delightful fragrance, more evident than in any other begonia I have grown.

It is one of the easiest grown begonias of all the many I have had. Mrs. Buxton says it will take more sun than most of the genus. This seems to be true; however, it does well under almost all conditions. It is easily propagated from stem or leaf-bud cuttings. I think I have produced plants from a leaf stem without the basal bud, which I have never been able to do from any other fibrous rooted begonia. Having tried it only twice, I take no oath in the matter.

This may be the seed parent used by Leslie Woodriff in breeding *Begonia* "Tea Rose," *B. "Pet,"* etc. *B. "Tea Rose"* resembles my plant, but, for me, is less satisfactory in house culture.

The one fault I find with *Begonia "Odorata Alba"* is its tendency to grow into an awkward specimen. Really, the fault is mine. It can be shaped by judicious pinching to almost any form. However, I cannot bring myself to pinch out the flowerbuds that it continually produces.

MAY T. DREW

From Begonia Bulletin for Eastern Fans

—B—

Begonia "Odorata Alba" is a cross of Mrs. T. B. Shepherd of California. This plant growing in the ground in the Woodriff greenhouse in Harbor, Oregon, is a giant specimen at least six feet tall and with the same diameter. It has white flowers and large, shiny semper-floren type leaves. *Begonia "Pet,"* by Woodriff, is a cross made by using *B. "Odorata Alba"* and *B. "Bijou de Jardin"* with red flowers. *B. "Bijou de Jardin"* was a cross of a semperfloren begonia and *B. nitida*. *B. "Tea Rose"* with a strong fragrance, also a Woodriff cross, has *B. "Odorata Alba"* and *B. dichroa* as parents.

Begonia odorata is a species found in South America in 1837 and has been called *B. nitida odorata*, *B. diptera* and *B. sauveolens*, which in turn has been called *B. grandiflora*, *B. humilis*, *B. macrophylla* and *B. disticha*.

J.L.C.

Seeds, Seedlings and Hybrids

By DON HORTON

A NEW YEAR is here and with it the inauguration of a new monthly series in *The Begonian*. As the title implies, the subject matter of this column will be threefold. First of all the production and planting of seed; secondly, the raising of the seedlings; and thirdly, the creation of new varieties, hybridization. Although we are primarily concerned with begonias and shade plants we are not going to limit ourselves to them.

I am not writing this column as an expert, but as a moderator. For material I want to hear from the readers. I want to know what plants or subjects you want to read about, your questions, and, above all, your experiences. Address mail to:

Don Horton, 683 Congress St., Costa Mesa, Calif.

And for a starter, I would especially like to hear from any of you who have successfully raised bulbs from seed.

Sowing Begonia Seed in Jars

THIS season is the best of the whole year for sowing house plant seed indoors. Seed sown now will produce fair-sized young plants by the time the warm weather comes, when they can be put out on their own. Indeed, it is almost too late to plant tuberous begonia seed and still expect very many blossoms this summer. Gloxinias and streptocarpus sown now will bloom in about six months. For planting seeds of begonias and gesneriads, as well as fern spores, I prefer the gallon jar method.

Screen a mixture of three-quarters leaf mold and one-quarter peat moss through a fourth inch mesh screen. A small portion should be screened through a window screen. Sterilize the soil mixture. This can be done by pouring boiling water through it. Then in a wide-mouth gallon jar that has been sterilized by washing with a bleach solution put the coarsely screened mixture to a depth of one inch and top with a little of the finely screened material. The soil mixture should not be too moist but should crumble apart when it is squeezed into a ball. Sow the seeds directly on top of the mixture, do not cover.

It is usually easier to handle the seeds by creasing a piece of paper such as typing paper. Dump the seeds from their package or pod onto the paper, remove any debris such as seed pods and then by gently tapping the paper, work the seeds down the crease and over the side into the jar.

Screw the top on the jar and set in a warm place. A temperature of not less than 50° to 55° F. at night with a rise of 15° to 20° in the daytime is ideal.

As long as the lid is kept on, the moisture

in the jar cannot escape and consequently none will have to be added. In a week or ten days—or longer depending on the species or variety—little specks of green will appear on the surface of the soil telling you that the seed has germinated. You need not water or do anything until they are ready to transplant. Transplanting is usually done when their third leaf is developed. This is the first true leaf.

The transplanting is a critical stage. The plants are being moved from the very warm and humid atmosphere that they had inside the jar. The important thing is not to subject them to any sudden change. This may be done in several ways. First of all, keep them at the same temperature. Some people start taking the lid off the jar for a few days before transplanting. But one must be careful that the soil doesn't dry out. Another method is to transplant into a pot and cover with glass which may be removed little by little.

Raising plants from seed is very rewarding. This is especially true when they are your own hybrids. For only the hybridist can express the thrill he has as he watches his "babies" develop, hoping that the desired characteristics come forth. Also, there is the excitement when that first seedling gloxinia buds. What will its color be? What will its pattern be? Try growing plants from seed—you'll love it.

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A Begonia Garden

THE BEGONIA garden, (planned and staged by the M. C. Gruenbaun and Wm. Penn Branches of the A.B.S.), at the Fall Flower Show held at Swarthmore College in November was an unqualified success as attested to by the Purple Ribbon Award of Merit given by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. This particular ribbon is awarded on the basis of horticultural perfection; inasmuch as this is the largest fall flower show on the east coast we feel our pride in this award, and the first prize blue ribbon for the class, is excusable!

The garden covered a space 15' x 20' which was built up in a terraced effect, using heavy weathered railroad ties for retaining walls and steps, with peat moss and sawdust mixture defining the wide, easy paths. This same mixture filled the beds, enabling us to sink the pots and produce a "growing garden" effect.

Three broad low easy steps rose through the garden from front to back, ending at the top of the trellised terrace, and at right angles to a comfortably wide path so that one could walk along this path and view the nine baskets hanging from the trellis in the dappled shade of the laths. Snow fencing had been used on a framework to make this ingenious trellis. The baskets were filled with *Begonia* "Stitched Leaf," *B. "Marjorie Daw," B. "Paul Bruant," B. "Alpha Gere," B. scharffi* and *B. limminghi*, and kept free of bloom to further enhance the effect of the very tall, heavily laden plants placed at the very back of the terrace. Plants such as *B. "Bessie Buxton," B. pyramidalis; B. popenoei; B. compta; B. scharffi; B. "Mrs. Wallow hybrid;" B. "Mrs. Swisher hybrid;" B. "Prunifolia;" B. "Annabella;" B. laetevirides; B. "Black Beauty;" B. nitida; B. "Speculata."* This proved to be a most effective, eye stopping background with the plants placed so as to complement each other and at the same time, display their different textures and colorings to best advantage.

Directly in front of these tall beauties, which measured five feet in some cases, and under the hanging baskets, were the intermediate begonias. Several light colored, large leaf plants were strategically placed to catch the light and carry the eye into the depth of this top tier of the garden. The edge of this path was lined with free blooming *Begonia* "Pink Carlton Pompom."

As you came down the steps, to the right, was a row of rhizomatous begonias. *B. manicata aureo-maculata cristata; B. "immense;" B. "Erythrophylla Helix Cristata;" B. "Map-hil;" B. "Bow-arriola;" B. "Elea;" B. "Helen Krauss;" B. "Bunchii" and B. mazae.*

On the next lower level was a collection of smaller plants showing great variety in leaf pattern, texture and color. Here one found *Begonia "Viaude;" B. "Lucerna;" B. scharffi; B. richardsiana; B. manicata aureo-maculata; B. "Beatrice Haddrell;" B. "Vedderi;" B. "South Park;" B. "Annabelle;" B. "Braemar;" B. "Mrs. Fred Scripps;" B. acutangularis; B. "Chiala rosea;" B. kenworthyi; B. "Robin;" B. "Mde. de Lesseps;" B. "Pricketts Hybrid;" B. "Erythrophylla crispa;" B. boweri major; B. "Fisher's ricinifolia" and B. "MacAlice." The lowest level on this side of the steps was a low *B. "Red Carlton Pompom."**

The entire left side of the wide steps was on one level, even with the height of the terrace at the back, making for greater landscape interest in the display as a whole. This section was filled completely with the silvered leaf begonias. Plants such as *B. "Sir Percy;" B. "Dewdrop;" B. "Pearli;" B. "Brocade;" B. "Illustrata;" B. incana; B. venosa; B. keller-manni* (which was particularly outstanding); *B. "Skeezar;" B. "Silver Fleece;" B. "Zee-Bowman;" B. "Muriel Day;"* and assorted silver leaved rex begonias. These begonias were unbelievably handsome and varied in their shades of greenish-grays, leaf textures and sizes, and seemed to be the focal point, and glamor spot of the garden!

The entire plan was designed from the practical, as well as the artistic viewpoint, the overall color of green tones, silver grays and structural browns blended well and presented a harmonious, livable garden.

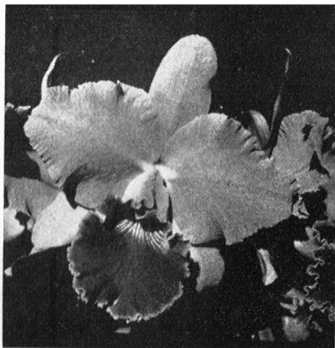
The entire project represented the combined efforts of both branches, under the chairmanship of Mrs. George Earle DeCoursey who is well known not only for her begonia knowledge, but general garden work and landscape design too.

A large master plan placed to one side of the garden showed the name and position of the plants and was constantly consulted by the public. An unprecedented amount of interest was shown in this garden by the flower show visitors, and particularly so when it was learned that all of the 150 (approximately) plants were grown and owned by the members, and were not commercially cared for (but rather, lovingly and individually!).

NANCY SHAUB TIMMS



LC ATLANTIS, 'Surprise'



LC ARECA, 'Model' F.C.C., R.H.S.



LC BONANZA, 'Pioneer'

Cattleya Questions and Answers

Q. I have a plant of Lc. Canhamiana alba that has made up a growth with a sheath but I have waited several months and still I don't see any buds coming up.

A. It is characteristic of some hybrids, especially those with C. Mossiae blood in them, to mature a growth with a sheath and then wait until their season to bloom. C. Gigas (Warszewiczii) has a habit of flowering immediately as the growth is matured. We must remember that each species has its own growth habits which it imparts in varying degrees to its progeny. A good example of inheritance is C. Enid which is bred from C. Gigas x C. Mossiae. This hybrid has a habit of flowering two and even three times a year.

Q. Will my Cattleya plant flower at exactly the same time every year?

A. No. Though a plant can be expected to flower at approximately the same time each year, due to variations in weather and growing conditions it is impossible to predict exactly when it will flower, even though we know when it has flowered.

Q. What effect does repotting have on the flowering of a Cattleya plant?

A. Quite often a plant that is repotted in sheath will flower several months earlier than normal due to the shock of repotting.

Q. When does a Cattleya plant give its best flowers?

A. On the flowering just before it needs repotting. In other words the longer a plant is established and receiving good care the better are the chances of it bearing good flowers.

Q. I bought a plant from a reputable grower who said he had flowered it and it was a very good variety. I flowered it, however, and the flowers were average only.

A. The plant buyer who has purchased from a reputable grower must realize that the flowers we get on our plants are about 90% good growing and 10% good breeding. In other words, the finest orchid in the world when poorly grown will be no better than an average one that is well grown. Never under any conditions, however, minimize the importance of good breeding.

Q. I have several plants that flowered this winter with poor sepal quality though they generally flower quite well.

A. This is a condition that is quite common throughout the country each year, especially in the fall. There is a certain relationship between drastic changes in growing conditions and the flower quality. When the weather turns cold and more artificial heat is used in the houses this trouble with flower quality seems to occur. It has proven beneficial in many cases to damp between the pots at nightfall and again in the morning. Pay especial attention to ventilation at this time also.

Q. Should I feed my Cattleyas?

A. Though definite benefits are derived from feeding there is no substitute for ordinary good growing practices. In other words, feeding is not the short cut to good orchids or a substitute for lack of good growing. However, as we have said feeding is definitely beneficial if wisely done. Most commercial growers feed Cattleyas.

Q. How often should a Cattleya bloom?

A. It should bloom at least once a year, and may bloom twice a year or more, in the case of some of the more prolific hybrids.

Q. How long does an orchid plant live?

A. There is no life limit to a plant which is well grown. It will thrive indefinitely under

good cultural conditions. Divisions of some fine varieties are known to be 50 and 60 years old and still doing well.

Q. How may the necessary high humidity be maintained in the greenhouse when one is away and does not have automatic controls?

A. Spread gravel or crushed rock on the floor, use brick walks and place trays of coke under the benches. When well dampened down these will give off moisture for a long time. Sprays or atomizers under the benches automatically controlled are the perfect answer.

Q. Does it hurt to leave the flowers on the plant for a long time?

A. The flowers do take some strength from the plant, but if the plant is a strong and healthy specimen, it will not injure it to leave the blooms on it. If the plant is weak, they should be removed. If the plant is in a very poor condition, it is well not to allow it to bloom at all.

Q. Where do I cut the bloom from a Cattleya plant?

A. Always cut through the sheath about a half inch above the place where it joins the leaf and pseudobulb, using a clean sharp knife and making certain that a clean surface is left.

Q. What do you do with backbulbs?

A. If a plant is worthy of propagation, the backbulbs may be placed in a warm, humid spot, perhaps under the benches, and given light syringings until there is evidence of new growth. Then they are potted the same as mature plants, using "pot clips" to hold the rootless rhizome firmly in the compost.

Q. Is a Cattleya a parasite?

A. No. The Cattleya is an epiphyte and derives much of its nourishment from the air. It is merely a tenant of the tree upon which it grows.

Q. Should orchid corsages be kept in the refrigerator?

A. No. Home refrigerators are usually too cold and the flower soon fades after being brought out into the warmer outside air. (Florists' refrigerators carry a temperature of 45 to 48 degrees.) It is better to keep your orchid bloom in a cool place where it may be seen and its beauty enjoyed.

Q. Please tell me the maximum number of times per year one can safely spray orchids with DDT.

A. DDT is not a spray to use casually, and should be used only when there is a need. As a matter of fact, excessive use allows the population of springtails and red spiders to increase because it is ineffective against these, while it removes their predators. Its chief use for

orchids is to rid them of scale and to control thrips. The latter are a particular nuisance in warm weather, when they blow in from the garden, and they may be accompanied by leaf hoppers and various other garden insects. A fair schedule for DDT would be once a month from April or May through September, and either not at all in the winter, or not more than once in three months if there is a need.

Q. Is there any solution for "dry sepal"?

A. Poor potting or sudden changes in weather conditions as is common during the fall months, over-watering, high temperatures at night, or excessive temperatures by day—all can be causes of dry sepals and general poor flower texture. In such cases the sepals dry almost as soon as the flower opens, and the rest of the flower will be poor and soon wither. Another type of dry sepals is that in which the sepals dry right away, but the rest of the flower remains of good texture for a long time. While improved potting and culture will help a great deal in the first type, this last may be an inherited condition. If it occurs year after year on the same plant, even if the plant is in good shape and grows vigorously, it may be that the plant is not worth keeping. Dry sepals are a problem with many growers, and turn many hopes into disappointments. Except for the inherited type, the condition is certainly a cultural one. Work is being done in an attempt to sift out the factors, and there may be some helpful information soon. In the meantime, we have seen many a plant improve with good, hard potting, careful watering, cool night temperatures, etc., so that this alone may solve your problem.

Q. Should you cut off pseudobulbs when they lose their leaves?

A. There is no reason to cut them off, except at repotting time, unless they become decayed. However, if the back pseudobulb or two become dry and shriveled and detract from the appearance of the plant, they may be removed. There is a movement of food minerals out of old plant parts into the younger ones, so even a leafless pseudobulb contributes to the nourishment of the plant for a while.

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No. 1. B. Lloydii Tuberous—Mixed. Pendulous or hanging basket. Double flowers in shades of scarlet, rose, salmon and white. Price 50c per packet. **No. 2. B. Tuberous mixed** as listed in November "The Begonian." Price 50c per packet.

We are happy to offer you the choice semperflorens seed listed below. **No. 1. B. Semperflorens Pink Tausendschoen**—(Thousand Wonders) hybrid—Heterosis strain. Favorite plant—dense, compact and uniform in growth with a profusion of lustrous centifolius rose flowers. Highly recommended. **No. 2. B. Semperflorens Red Tausendschoen**—Same as above but with red flowers. This plant received an award of merit from the Royal Horticultural Society in 1955. **No. 3. B. Semperflorens Chatelaine**—Sometimes called B. Semperflorens King of the reds. Intermediate growth; free flowering carmine red. Vigorous. **No. 4. B. Semperflorens Caffra**. New species from South Africa. White to pink flowers. **No. 5. B. Semperflorens Winter Romance**. Miniature. Rich carmine scarlet, for winter blooming. **No. 6. B. Semperflorens Loveliness**. Flesh pink flowers and green foliage. **No. 7. B. Crown Jewels**. These were received from England with no description. **No. 8. B. Semperflorens White Pearl**—Glittering snow white flowers, green foliage. Above semperflorens are available at 25c per packet.

Special Seed: "Van der Meer's Glorie" or cheimanthus strain. Often called Christmas begonia. Considered one of the most delightful winter-flowering house or greenhouse plants. Flowers are single, rich warm salmon-orange. Foliage green. Seeds are scarce. 35c per small packet. Any of the above make beautiful plants for the "window-sill watcher" or for the greenhouse.

Begonias: No. 1. B. evansiana rosea. Asiatic species. Hardy outdoors in cold climates when grown in the open ground. Bulbils form in the leaf axils and fall to the ground and new plants will spring up. Very satisfactory plant for borders in the shade garden. Flowers are pink and fairly large. Foliage is

green with purple veining underneath.

No. 2. Manda's Woolly Bear. Small growing. Leaves short, broad-ovate, pointed, glossy dark olive-green, brown tomentum beneath. Flowers white. Thrives in heavy soil and blooms continuously. **No. 3. B. ulmifolia**—Medium growth, leaves green, rough, hairy, elmlike in shape. Flowers small, white and numerous. **No. 4. Unnamed cane type mixed**—A mixture of many cane type begonias. We have several beautiful and unusual plants from these seed. **No. 5. B. pope-noei**—Honduras. Rhizomatous, with large, pointed, bright green leaves. Flowers are large, white, in tall straight panicles. **No. 6. B. hookeriana**—Brazil. Woody stemmed, branching plant with sharply pointed semi-heart shaped toothed leaves of dark green to rust color depending on the light. The surface is smooth and the underside has a dusty appearance due to tomentum. Any of above, 25c per packet.

Gloxinias: No. 1. Gloxinia, deep purple. No. 2. Gloxinian pink tiger. No. 3. Gloxinia pink with white throat. No. 4. Gloxinia—slipper type—purple with white dots. Any above, 25c per packet.

There is still ample time to plant seeds of *Primula obconica*, cineraria, dwarf impatiens, calceolaria and naegelia. These are all useful and beautiful plants for the shade garden or greenhouse. Seeds are available at 25c per packet and are of the finest strains.

Exotic offer: **Stephanotis floribunda** (vine)—Madagascar jasmine. Considered one of the best greenhouse specimen plants. Flowers are waxy white, fragrant, in umbel-like clusters in the leaf axils. Leaves are thick and leathery in appearance. These are freshly collected seeds and have been tested and germinated in about 7 days. 5 seeds for 25c. Limited supply. Choice. **Gesneria Leopoldi**—Brazil. Greenhouse plant with scarlet flowers. Hanging basket or pot culture. 25c per packet.

Other genera. **No. 1. Caesalpinia gilliesii**—South America. Sometimes known as bird of paradise bush (not to be confused with *strelitzia reginae*). Medium sized shrub with feathery leaves. Flow-

ers yellow, bright red stamens, very showy. Fairly hardy and blooms the first year from seed. Seed should be soaked in warm water before planting. **No. 2. Hibiscus "Golden Bowl"**—mallow family. Medium shrub with large yellow flowers with purple eye. Semihardy. Good background or hedge plant. **No. 3. Leucospermum grandiflorum.** Showy shrub from South Africa. **No. 4. Aristea thyrsoflora**—South African species of the iris family. Violet blue flowers in profusion. Effectively used as a specimen plant. **No. 5. Moraea**—African iris. Flowers bright lilac blue with orange eye. Blooms profusely in winter here in California. **No. 6. Marcia gracilis**—South American iris also known as walking iris. Bright, shiny, evergreen foliage in fans from whence comes the flower scape looking like another leaf. At the tip of this scape the flowers form and bloom after which young plants spring from the same point. As these young plants become large the scape bends down touching the ground. When the plants root, the first step is taken in the process of walking. Most effective grown in hanging position. Interesting greenhouse plant. Packets small. **No. 7. Arum italicum** (green calla)—Bulbous. Foliage lance-shaped, marbled and veined silver. Flowers are parchment-like, creamy to green. Bright red berries form in large clusters in late summer. Can be grown in the greenhouse. **No. 8. Arum palaestinum.** Black calla. Handsome foliage, flowers like a calla lily but blackish, purple inside the spathe. Tender. Other genera 25c per packet.

We have a few seed of *crinum moorei* as described in October "The Begonian." These are very large seed and require special mailing. The price, 25c per seed.

Fern spores: **No. 1. Platycerium grande** (broad horn). This fern is native to the East Indies. The sterile and fertile fronds are different, the sterile fronds forming a heavy shield-like backing for the fertile erect fronds. They are entirely covered with a stellate pubescence, giving the fern a rather woolly appearance. **No. 2. Platycerium bifurcatum** (stag horn). Also known as alcornet. An epiphytic fern which grows on the branches of trees in its native habitats in Eastern Asia and Peru. Under favorable growing conditions the

fronds sometimes grow to 3 feet, the under surfaces being white and the upper surfaces covered with a stellate pubescence. **No. 3. Pityrogramma triangularis** (gold black fern). The Pityrogramma family is of tropical origin and very susceptible to cold. They like a damp home beside a pond or small stream. **No. 4. Phyllitis scolopendrium** (hart's tongue). This fern of Great Britain is a very graceful evergreen species, growing in damp shady places. It is subject to great variety from the spores, there being over 800 known varieties. Fronds are bright green and often grow to 2 feet in length. It likes a little lime in the soil. **No. 5. Blechnum occidentale** (western fern). An evergreen fern, native to Mexico, Jalapa, and tropical America. It propagates very easily from spores. The fronds are pinnate and lanceolate in form. Young fronds are pink. **No. 6. Cyrtomium falcatum** (holly fern). Really a hardy fern, but not often treated as such. It is an evergreen species from Japan, very easily cultivated. It has very lovely fronds up to 18 inches in length, and is very desirable for ferneries. **No. 7. Alsophila australis** (tree fern). The tree ferns are very graceful plants for greenhouses, with their arching, usually thrice-pinnate fronds topping a true stem. They are especially striking when used with colorful rex begonias. Hardy in mild climates. **No. 8. Adiantum capillus-veneris** (Venus' Hair). The fronds of this fern, usually from 8 to 10 inches, are very graceful and much subdivided. The blackish stalk divides into numerous branches until they are not bigger than a horsehair, black and shining. These terminate in green leaflets which are fan shaped and cut into lobes at their outer and rounded edges. Above ferns, 4 packets for \$1.00, 8 packets for \$2.00.

Adiantum (maiden hair)—Ocean Spray—new. A sturdy growing form of this popular fern. Ideal for pots and for combinations. Easily grown from spores. 35c per small packet.

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Seed Fund Administrator
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—B—

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FOR A

Happy and Prosperous New Year

FROM

Redondo Area Branch

2308 Rockefeller Lane, Redondo Beach

(Girl Scout Hall)

Begonias in South . . .

(Continued From Page 7)

To sterilize, boiling water is poured on this twice. For first and second transplantings, I also use the sterilized soil. Gallon glass jars are used for the first transplanting; grape boxes for the second, using glass to cover the boxes until the plants start new growth. After this, they are large enough to grow with little extra care.

I have dense shade for my begonias and ferns in summer. My rexes are kept in two greenhouses: one a pit which has glass on three sides and a tin roof; the other, a glasshouse being five feet in the ground. These are sun heated most of the time using heat when it gets down to 35 degrees outside.

We have found the rex begonia more hardy than many of the rhizomatous. None go dormant under the cool greenhouse management. I always thought they bloomed in spring until a year ago. Last August they started blooming and bloomed until April and started again in July.

My rexes are pampered pets, but have proved they can take it after they are matured plants.

—B—

What interest do members hold in the American Begonia Society? In accepting the New Constitution printed in the November issue, less than 10% cast votes.

BEGONIAS — GESNERIADS
HOUSE PLANTS

Unusual and Rare Seeds and Plants

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Annual Descanso

Camellia Show

CAMELLIAS from southern and western states of the nation will compete with locally grown Southern California Camellias at the Annual Descanso Gardens Camellia Show in La Canada, Calif., from March 2 through March 10, 1957.

Co-sponsoring the Camellia Show will be the Los Angeles Camellia Council, Ltd., and the Department of Parks and Recreation of Los Angeles County.

On the closing days, March 9 and 10, a special Camellia Arrangements Show will be presented which will feature Camellias in flower arrangements of every conceivable type.

—B—

If You Mulch . . .

IF YOU have a peat moss or leaf mold mulch over your flower beds, be sure that the water is going down through into the root area when you irrigate, not just wetting the surface and running off.

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Leaves From Our Begonia Branches

GLENDALE

Miss Pruella May Abbott of Anaheim entertained us with suggestions on Christmas decorations and package wrapping. She demonstrated making many kinds of flower arrangements as well as decorative packages.

—B—

MARGARET C. GRUENBAUM

In November, our president, Mrs. Henry Schaffer, of Jenkintown, Pa., was our hostess. Schedules and plans were made for the coming year. The following officers were elected: Pres., Mrs. Frank Oehrle; Vice Pres., Mrs. Henry Schaffer; Secy., Mrs. Ernest Jones; Treas., Mrs. Julius Hienicke; and Cor. Sec. and Nat. Dir., Mrs. Adolph Belser. We are a scattered club and when old winter puts on a show, we are snowbound for a few days.

—B—

HOLLYWOOD

Celebrating its sixteenth birthday, will serve birthday cake and coffee. Mr. and Mrs. James Randall, who have an outstanding informal shade garden, will show pictures of their recent trip. A cordial invitation is extended to all branches.

—B—

LOUISIANA CAPITAL

New officers are: Mr. C. L. McAdams, Pres.; Mrs. Herbert E. Dorris, Vice-Pres.; and Mrs. T. O. Day, Sec. and Treas.

—B—

MISSOURI

All present officers were re-elected by acclamation. It was a rather stormy day but we had a nice attendance regardless of the weather, and one visitor. Discussion on various types of begonias, winter lighting and care, was very interesting and educational. The Branch sends season's greetings.

—B—

REDONDO AREA

Had its annual election of officers for 1957, after an interesting panel discussion with questions and answers, with Mr. Cal Trowbridge, Mr. LeRoy Borchardt and Mr. Joe Taylor furnishing the answers.

New officers for the year 1957 are as fol-

lows: Pres., Mr. Floyd L. Buell; First Vice Pres., Mrs. LeRoy Borchardt; Second Vice Pres., Mr. Ollen Eipper; Sec., Mrs. Opal Ahern; Treas., Mrs. Jack Prince; Nat. Rep., Mrs. Ken Terry; and Public Relations, Mrs. Pearl Riggles.

—B—

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

Mrs. Hoggan from Aleene's Fiber and Floral Supply, a well-known floral designer specializing in corsages and floral arrangements, demonstrated clever ideas using white foam, glitter, natural and artificial flowers and leaves in making center pieces for the festive table and decorations for the door and mantle. She also wrapped a gift plant by using two toned foil which set off the plant. With an 18" square of foil, she folded to the inside a margin of 1½", then put the plant in the center of the square and pressed the foil around the pot. A diagonal ribbon from the bottom of the pot to the rim, she fastened on the bottom of the pot with a piece of Scotch tape. A wired florist's bow which she demonstrated was inserted in the pot where the diagonal ribbon was tied—a very beautifully decorated gift.

—B—

SEATTLE

Elected officers are: Pres., Mrs. Don Westover; Pres. Elect, Harry Shultz; and Sec.-Treas., Mrs. Carl Starks. Directors are: C. H. Tusler, National Director; Harold Shawver; David Jones; and H. W. Barrager.

—B—

WILLIAM PENN

Mrs. Ernest Drew had a most interesting report to make concerning *semperflorens* culture in a greenhouse. The begonias in question were being grown along with African violets in pure coke in flats under the benches. The seeds were believed to have dropped from blooming plants onto the coke and germinated. The even humidity of the greenhouse is of course ideal, as well as the controlled temperature, but the available food supply, lack of soil, exposed roots, and pH factor of the coke all were questions brought up for discussion. Could this be done in a simulated "greenhouse" on a window sill?—i.e. a terrarium or aquarium or any deep dish that could be

covered with clear plastic? It all sounds so simple and easy, with no damp-off or mold. If anyone should try it let us all know how you made out, will you?

The October meeting was held at "Chesterbrook Farm" the home of Mrs. J. Packard Laird. Mrs. Laird had many large and handsome begonias on display; the one chosen for study being an unnamed rex which provided a lively session since we were undecided as to its true identity.

This most unusual rex was thought to be fibrous rooted by the majority and had large smooth green, deeply lobed leaves. These leaves were covered with white bumps giving a quilted effect to the smoothness, and were varied in size and contour, from round to regular to pointed with reddish-purple margins. The veins were depressed and prominent on top; on the underside they were raised and deep red, with faint hairs at the center. At the time of viewing there were heavy clusters of buds but no fully opened flowers. The stems seem to change with age and cultural conditions but in the main were reddish, the stipules also being reddish and pointed, hairy and very firm. The young petioles were red fading to pale green as they aged.

—B—

FROM THE MAIL BAG

I use sand for begonia cuttings; the roughness of it scars the stems and encourages root growth; it drains well and one can't very well drown a cutting this way. I also use Rootone. I potted up 3 dozen rooted cuttings for the Church Bazaar and they go like hot cakes.

Minutes, National Board, Nov. 26

Meeting of National Board of American Begonia Society called to order at 7:40 P.M. in Los Angeles City Hall by President Trowbridge. Opened with Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and reading of Aims and Purposes of Society.

President Trowbridge welcomed everyone and reported Mrs. Coe bedfast with broken ankle and Mr. Sault in Hospital for major surgery.

Minutes of October and November meetings read and approved.

Report of Finance Committee given. All Treasurer's report read and approved. Savings and Loan Companies investigated paid same interest and were Federally insured. Committee recommended the American Savings & Loan Association of Manhattan Beach as it was near the home of the Treasurer. Moved by Mr. Walton, seconded by Mrs. Brandon that we establish an account with the American Savings and Loan of Manhattan Beach, depositing \$550.00 Revolving Convention Fund, \$109.00 Flower Show Fund and \$106.00 Life membership fund, to draw current interest rate to be compounded quarterly. Carried.

Vice President Browne reported selling paper plates left from Snack Bar and 2 begonia pins. Remitted to treasurer \$9.25.

Membership Chairman Walton reported new members 60, renewing members 107.

Research Director Leatherman read letters from Mr. Mason of England and Mr. J. R. Seal of Borneo and several others interested in research. She asked that a Begonian be sent each month to Mr. Mason and Mr. Seal. Moved by Mr. Moore, seconded by Mr. Taylor that a Begonian be sent each month, to Mr. Mason and Mr. Seal, for 1 year, subject to renewal. Carried.

President Trowbridge reported visiting San Francisco Branch and while there he appointed Hyacinth Smith as Northern California Director of Public Relations.

President Trowbridge announced that December 15th is the deadline for balloting on Constitution and Bylaws and appointed as a committee to count the votes, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Stoddard and Mrs. Ahern.

Mrs. Korts, Chairman of School of Judges, announced that she will have two

in rose form and ruffled novelty

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lectures in January and she will have tests arranged and cards granted.

Awards chairman Arbuckle will prepare list of begonias registered in 1952 and will have committee test plants to see if they are worthy of the Robinson Medal.

Business Manager Stoddard, having been absent in September and October, gave a report on advertising from September 24th to November 26th. Balance due \$129.91.

Seed Fund Administrator Gee reported income \$82.47, expense \$13.30, remitted \$69.17.

COMMUNICATIONS:

From Redondo Area Branch asking permission to change their Trophy, which had never been used, from Out of State Entries, in the National Flower Show, to a trophy for the best plant in the semperflorens division. From San Miguel Branch asking National Board and each Branch to contribute something to the President's Expense Fund in commemoration of the Society's twenty-fifth anniversary. Letter from Mr. Williams of San Diego in regard to the Condensed Minutes having been omitted from the November Begonian.

Moved by Mr. Browne, seconded by Mrs. Bauer that Redondo Area Branch be empowered to change the Trophy as requested. Carried.

President Trowbridge instructed Directors to take the message back to their branches in regard to the President's Fund.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Moore reported investigating the Insurance carried by the National Organization and he finds it covers the National meetings only and does not cover any Branch activity.

The committee appointed to check into the Rules set down by Mr. Butterfield has approved the rules with the addition of the following.

Moved by Mrs. Cramer seconded by Mrs.

Brandon that two black and white photos accompany the registration of a plant as suggested by Mrs. Korts. Carried.

Moved by Mrs. Leatherman, seconded by Mrs. Bauer that the Board accept the rules as approved by the committee with the above addition. Carried.

The president appointed Mr. Bedson, Mrs. Bauer, Mrs. Drew, Mrs. Graham and Mrs. Carlton as a committee to work with Mr. Butterfield.

NEW BUSINESS:

Frank Moore moved, seconded by Edna Korts, that the original copy of "Les Begonias" be placed on loan to the Los Angeles County Arboretum. Carried.

Mrs. Cramer asked approval of the Board on the project sponsored by San Gabriel Branch to raise money to provide a 20' x 40' greenhouse for begonias at the Arboretum.

Moved by Fred Browne, seconded by Edna Korts that the action of San Gabriel Branch in regard to placing a greenhouse for begonias at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum as an American Begonia Society project be approved. Carried.

There being no further business the meeting closed to meet again January 28th.

Respectfully submitted,

Arline Stoddard
National Secretary

Calendar

Jan. 11—Hollywood—Birthday party and colored pictures.

Jan. 23—San Gabriel Valley—Anniversary dinner with Peggy Sullivan, Travelogue of Africa.

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