

Tuberous Begonias

# *The Begonian*

DEVOTED TO THE SHELTERED GARDENS

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# From the Editor . . .

Again, many thanks for the letters, from you good folks back in the East particularly! In fact, you have written three to one more than the folks out West! We still want more info from you home growers on how you do it—and our budget is coming along nicely so we can take a picture or two of your favorite plant!

In this issue we have used no “re-capped” material! All new! Thnaks much! There were a couple of letters I find in some old files that I used. There was no reference to having been used before and they were too good to pass by.

I have been visiting around a bit to some of our growers and in our next month's issue will be a recap of what we saw at Louise Schwerdtfeger's. If any of you visit in Santa Barbara, it's worth the trip to see what she is doing out on the Hope Ranch. Everything from seeding to every type of propagation—and the Begonias she has developed.

Only 5 reports came in from our 47 branches. Some reporting! Look—all you have to do is give me one good sentence from what the speaker said and tell me if you're still around!

What are you doing to increase members? Any unusual ideas?

Here is a suggestion that might create new interest for both the novice and the veteran Begonia enthusiast in our monthly meetings. Each month at either the beginning of the program or after the speaker, devote say 20 minutes to an actual demonstration alternating every other meeting for both groups.

For instance, one meeting let the novice bring in their seedlings and unidentified plants, sick plants and so on. Have the veterans give suggestions and advice. The following month have the veterans bring in their seedlings and mixes, fine specimens. The novice would be interested and encouraged by what he or she will eventually be able to accomplish.

The veteran would feel that his interest and enthusiasm would be falling on fertile soil. Mrs. Lloyd and myself saw this happen at a recent meeting and frankly, I learned more in those few minutes than I would have in reading about the subject. Perhaps what was picked up in this type of program we could report to you—right from the Begonia front!

Well, it's an idea and I was glad to hear the report. I might add that in 40 shade plant societies that my wife and I visited in two months, we found the average length of meeting was two hours and 35 minutes. Maybe for busy people it's a little long.

In this issue are a number of questions being asked by members. I have taken the liberty to open their letters to you. Let's have some answers. After all, we are working to help each other.

What about this month all of us writing a letter to Mrs. Bessie Buxton for all the wonderful work she has done for our society and for us. These folks work and work and work—then pass on before we get around to strike off medals and honors. Write her, Mrs. Henry Buxton, 114 Central Street, Peabody, Massachusetts. I am doing so today—you too! And by the by, Mrs. Buxton suggests we hear about culture of begonias from you folks in various parts of the country. That will help us to help more of you! Good idea, so write if you don't type!

I am the world's poorest writer—but I will get around to writing most of you shortly . . . and please, as one writer said—I am not an old man! Only 42, with two daily radio shows on gardening, America's only outdoor garden show on TV, 30 newspaper columns, newsletters to nurserymen, plant research for two companies—so Sassy and I keep busy with our own three gardens on top of that! But we love gardening—and work hard on our begonias that we want to learn more about! Oh yes, I forgot the duck, two dogs, and two cats that make up the rest of the family—and our two teen-age boys!

As ever, GL

# The Begonian

FEBRUARY, 1955

## Finger-Tip Weather . . .

—by GORDON BAKER LLOYD

Now in any dry section, or dry season of America, gardeners can grow begonias, tropicals and shade plants as well as they can be grown in the best managed hot houses and tropics from which they came.

This is all so easily done by backyard climate making with the finger tip control of a "do-it-yourself" kit that humidifies or waters these plants.

This interesting climate maker was invented—not by an avid gardener or hot house grower, but by one of the top military explosives engineers in America today. In seeing some of the problems of growing plants in dry air to his arid southwest, and the improper watering of many plants, he decided to do something about it in a reasonable manner, without fancy equipment, plumbing tools and other high costs.

Shade plants, exotics, and indoor plants, come from a climate that contains lots of moisture in the air. The moisture content of air is called humidity. To the grower it is called high and low humidity and frequently to the reader who follows the weather reports he sees in print the humidity, high or low, and can feel what is meant rather than knowing the meaning of the word itself.

These unusual plants with their leaf system built as it is, must thrive in an air with moisture content of between 50 and 75 per cent. Normally the average home gardener and small lath or glass house grower would invest in pipe, special humidifiers, and other expensive equipment to humidify his plants. At the best this equipment frequently does not perform as wanted and has to be replaced at heavy cost after a few years.

Facing the inventor, Norman MacLeod, was the problem of cost—to make it reasonable enough for the back yard gardener and professional enough for the larger grower; easy installation with no special equipment required for installation; and

something that would work under all ordinary water pressures using so little water that it would actually save water.

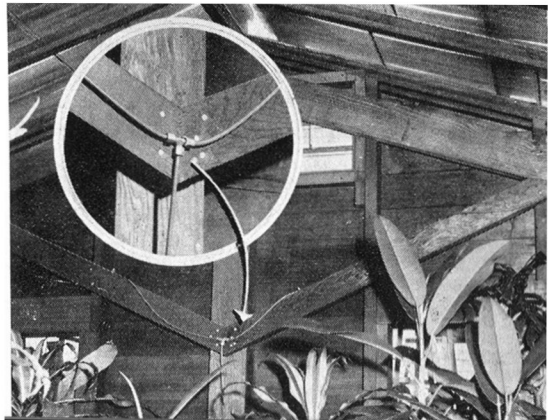
MacLeod started to work, backed by extensive research on various types of plastic conduit. Test after test went by to find a conduit that would resist wear and tear by water pressures and a conduit that would work under all types of weather that would still be light enough and small enough to be used without special equipment to suspend it in the lath or glass house.

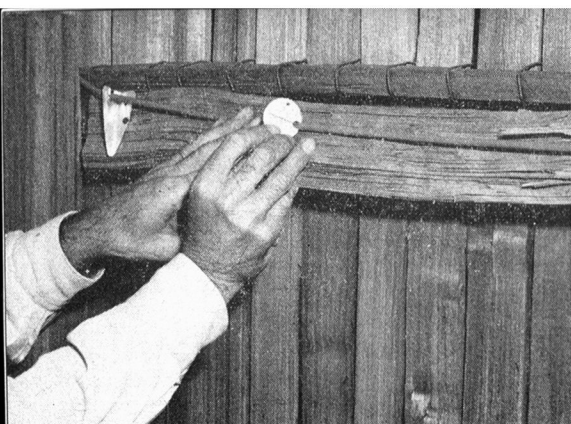
Most humidifiers have been attached, where needed, into pipes which required special figuring and fitting. The unique Aqua-Save comes in a kit of 100 feet of special plastic conduit. The conduit has in it no method of attaching special humidifiers, but instead is without holes or special attachments.

Here came the inventive genius of this man. He placed in the kit a special perforator that allows the gardener to quickly make a hole wherever he feels it is needed. For general humidifying the holes are punched in a jiffy about every two feet apart.

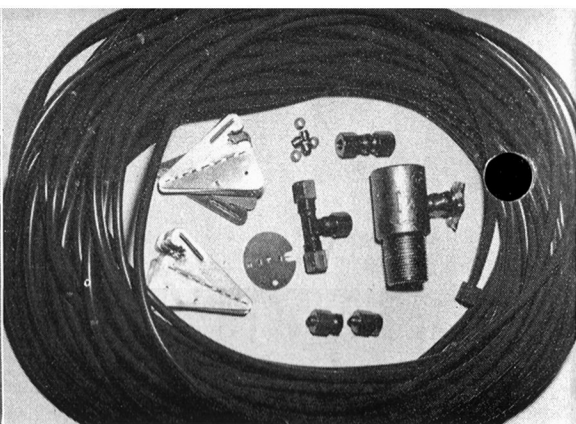
To assemble the Aqua-Save, the conduit is attached to a faucet by a special coupling that contains a brass valve. Remove the present faucet, put on the coupling, replace

Aqua-Save is shown stapled to rafter area above plant collection. Note insert showing how brass joint is used for lead in conduit.





Aqua-Save showing fastener that comes in kit to hold conduit. Hand holds special needle to make holes.



The entire kit out of the box showing 100 feet of tubing, and other parts for running the Aqua-Save.

the faucet and the conduit is attached, ready to work. This is the only spot where a wrench is used. The one-fourth inch plastic conduit has a very small ridge on one side that locks into a small stirrup which in turn holds the conduit to a wall or ground surface. This stirrup, in the kit, can be nailed on a pot or wall to keep the conduit from turning. In many Southern California installations the conduit is attached by the common staple which fits easily right over the tube.

If it is desired to run the conduit in two directions, the conduit is cut with a knife and a brass tee is placed easily with hand fittings only. If a tube should break, the kit comes with unions which join pieces of the tubing quickly together. All parts are precision made and are of solid brass.

If an overhead installation is needed, which is ideal for glass, lath and shady gardens, the fine spray cools and moistens the air as it falls slowly to earth. For overhead watering a larger hole can be pushed into the conduit giving a wetting stream instead of just air moistening.

A surface installation will supply a gentle spray to flower beds, both in sun or shade, and is especially effective on slopes and hillsides for there will be no run-off or erosion. This spray is so fine it can hardly be seen, yet it will provide the right amount of water that can be absorbed by the soil.

When properly directed the jets will water an area of from 6 to 12 feet from the line of the conduit. It is impossible to over-water or under-water in this method. The metal stirrups that are provided can be pressed into the ground to hold the conduit

rigid. A spray aimed at a 45 degree angle seems to be best for maximum coverage.

And still more unusual is the underground installation of this equipment. It can be used on slopes, for flower beds, orchards and vegetable gardens and will one day completely change our watering habits. The Aqua-Save will deliver at a very slow rate and can be left on continuously without a noticeable increase on the water bill. Very little water is lost by surface evaporation which makes this type of installation ideal for any arid area. The conduit is put at the drip line of a tree, shrub or plant, 6 to 8 inches deep. One perforation every two feet is all that is needed for trees and shrubs, with one each foot for the flower and vegetable area.

The full 100 feet of the conduit if properly perforated will deliver less water in 24 hours running than one lawn sprinkler head delivers in 1 hour. 100 feet of Aqua-Save may water as much area as 6 or more standard sprinkler heads at far cheaper cost. The difference is the slow effective rate of delivery and the amazingly large watering area covered by the micro-fine jets. The water bill will come down, and still more important your plants will grow better because of the healthy atmosphere in which they grow. I have used the unit in the patio, with hundreds of other home owners, to cool the patio. This in itself, any where in the country, will be worth installation of Aqua-Save.

It has also been used for cooling chicken pens, farm buildings, and other structures. What a blessing this man made weather conditioner is to the American gardener, thanks to the inventive genius of McLeod.

# Culture of Tuberous Begonias . . .

—by *PHILLIP BORTOLUSSI, San Francisco*

## LOCATION

The proper soil is very important for the achievement of fine begonias. For outdoor beds and potting mixture prepare the soil about six weeks before planting, because this gives the soil a chance to mix and decompose after you have added your fertilizer. I have had very excellent results with the following mixture: 6 parts well-rotted oak leaf mold, 1 part sand, 1 part fertile loam, 1 part cow manure and a little bone meal. This should be thoroughly mixed before being put into its permanent place. This soil should be watered now and then so that it will decompose. When you are starting your tubers in flats, I recommend the use of leaf mold only, with no fertilizer added to it. Your prime interest in this stage of planting is to get a good root system, so no fertilizer is needed.

## PLANTING

Planting can be done in late February and continue into late April. It is of the utmost importance that a tuber have a sprout before it is planted. When the sprout appears, plant the tubers in a flat and cover them with about one-half inch of soil. To encourage sprouting put tubers in a warm, light place. If tuber has a large indentation in the center, plant it on a slight angle, so as to prevent possible rotting. Start your tubers in a sheltered place. The basement is ideal, providing you have them near the windows where they receive sufficient light and air. When planted, the tubers should be watered thoroughly and then not watered again until they show signs of drying. When planting, space them properly, otherwise when transplanting them you will injure the root system. When the tubers have produced growth of about two inches, move the flats outside so that the tubers will get used to the change in temperature. When they reach the height of three or four inches they are ready to be transplanted into their permanent beds or pots. This should be done with extreme caution. When digging up the plant, be careful not to dis-

turb the root system. Plant the tubers the same depth, or perhaps a little deeper, than they were in the flats. Give them plenty of room.

If planting the tubers in pots, cover the drainage hole with a broken piece of pot. Use 6 to 8 inch pots. Leave the soil at least one inch below the rim of the pot or basket to permit watering. The regulation of moisture about the roots of tuberous begonias in pots is even more important than for plants in outdoor beds where excess moisture usually drains away better. Water only often enough to keep the surface soil slightly moist.

## CARE DURING GROWTH

Have the pointed part of the leaf face the front. Stake your plants as soon as they reach a suitable height, because they are very fragile and might break. When planting in pots, leave two stems to attain a show plant. It will sometimes happen that buds will appear on the plant while it is only five or six inches high. These buds should be snipped so that the plant will receive more strength and grow taller. When the plant has reached flowering size and buds appear, you can feed the plant. I have had good luck with fish emulsion. When the flowers open they will have to be staked to insure a lasting bloom. Use bamboo sticks, which are hollow, and take a thick wire, make a "U" and put the long end in the hollow of the stick. This will hold up the flower so it can be easily seen. As the season progresses, leaves and pedals of flowers will fall. They should be gathered up right away, or else they will promote disease.

The watering process is very important. It is best to water only when the plant needs it and this should be done in the morning, so that the plant will have time to dry before the mid-day sun hits it. When the plants are in bloom, water at the base of the plants so as not to wet the flowers. Once in a while, on a very hot day, spray

the plants from above with a very light spray in order to wash off the dust. But this should not be done too often. When watering, water well; then don't water again until the plant needs it.

#### SPRAYING

It often happens that the plants are attacked by certain insects or by disease. There are hundreds of sprays on the market, but I recommend the use of two. For insects use Chem-Hex; for diseases use Du-O-Cide. When spraying be sure to spray thoroughly the underside of the leaf and the top, of the leaf. When the plants are almost finished blooming and are near the end of their season they will be more susceptible to disease. Usually at this time stem rot will occur. For this I recommend the use of a paste called "Zerlait." Cut away the rotted part and apply this paste to it.

#### HARVESTING AND STORING OF TUBERS

In the case of the potted begonias when the foliage begins to yellow, lay the pot

on its side and allow stems to drop naturally. Gradually decrease watering to prevent plant growth into the cold season, which interferes with the early maturing of the tubers. Clean all the fallen pieces of stem or else they will cause disease. As soon as the stems are removed down to the tubers dig the tubers. Put them in the basement on a screen for a few weeks and the dirt will dry and fall through the screen. Then the tubers are ready to store in flats of peat moss in a cool, dry place until the following season. The same process applies to begonias in out-door beds. Let the begonias fall apart in the beds, and keep them clean.

#### HANGING BASKETS

Hanging basket begonias require the same care as tuberous begonias. Allow only 1 to 3 stems for each tuber. Encourage lateral growth by pinching out the tip of the first flower buds as they appear. Until basket-grown tuberous begonias are well-developed, remove all flower buds.

## "Sweepstakes Winner . . .

Mrs. Isabel Coleman, 2069 Midlothian Drive, Altadena, is a member of the San Gabriel Valley Branch A.B.S. She has been trimming floats for the Tournament of Roses since 1910.

Forty years ago this year she won Sweepstakes for the City of Los Angeles, and has been a consistent winner ever since.

In the last seven years she has won four Sweepstakes, 2 Theme and 1 Presidents Trophies.

In 1951 she won the National Cup for Hawaii.

This year she trimmed the Holland Float, getting a first.

Winning in all Sweepstakes for Long Beach, receiving three firsts, and one second.

I think this is a pretty good record for one person all alone. She deserves a lot of credit.

*Reported by*  
Elta Morant,  
35 Monterey Lane,  
Sierra Madre, California.

## Double Semperflorens . . .

Now is a good time to order some of those lovely double semperflorens begonias which Mrs. Korts and Mr. Hardy showed us last year. Look through the back numbers of THE BEGONIAN for the article from Logee's Nursery. Pictures and information concerning several of their semperflorens are in this article. They will also send you a catalog of these fine hybrid begonias upon request.

Double semperflorens almost bloom themselves to death. When the plant shows exhaustion by producing smaller flowers and leaves, pick off nearly all of the buds and flowers, let the plant rest for a short time and then fertilize. Use a nitrogen fertilizer sparingly—semperflorens need a fertilizer containing a high phosphoric and potash content to keep them blooming.

Semperflorens begonias need lots of light and many of them will tolerate full sun, even in Sacramento.

# Growing Begonias In New Jersey . . .

—SALLY E. De COU, *Philobegonia Barnch*

I have been a member of the American Begonia Society for one year and two months, but today I have over one hundred different begonias and love every one.

I do not have a green house, but I do have an enclosed porch with glass on three sides. There are seven windows along the front which reach to about twenty inches from the floor. These windows have Vita-Ray glass in them and this not only takes the sun's heat, but holds it consistently longer than ordinary window glass. A small wall radiator was put out here and this, with the heat from the house seems to be all we need for heat.

I have two long tables along the windows on which are my plants—small ones in front and taller ones graduating in the back. In the center window I have placed two glass shelves about eighteen inches apart. On these I have a beautiful *B. foliosa* on the top shelf whose arching branches have been in bloom continually since September when I received the plant from Mrs. DeCoursey of the William Penn Branch—also on that shelf are three *B. semperflorens* of the large "Sedum Morganiamum" whose branches now reach a length of thirty-six inches and is truly a show stopper. On the shelf below is *B. fuchsoides* drooping over the ends of the shelf and four large flowering *B. Semperflorens*. These *Semperflorens* were purchased from Mr. Arndt in Hightstown, N.J., and have bloomed continually, with large clusters, ever since I bought them. On the end is a *B. Calla Lily* which I have been told are very difficult to grow in the East—but mine has been growing and blooming as tho it did not know it, was not to grow too well. People say grow it in the shade—well, it gets at least four hours of full sun through Vita-Ray glass and loves it. On the tables are over eighty different begonias—some of which I am very proud. A large white *B. Shasta* which bloomed all summer for me in the yard continues to bloom on the enclosed porch. Also on the table is a large *B. Paul Bruant*—(has not bloomed

yet) but it will, I am sure. It grows luxuriantly, is now about two feet high and has a spread of two feet and it was purchased only this past summer from Mrs. Fort. Also is a *B. ulmifolia* which has a span of over three feet—and all of this luxuriant growth on a porch where the temperature last night went down to 44 degrees since it was 2 degrees below outside (January 15, '54). Not a plant seemed to suffer.

On a second table is *B. Alpha Geer* and what a plant it is. Sturdy—three feet tall and still growing. Also a large Swishers Hybrid with beautiful deeply-cut leaves and coloring, a *B. subvillosa* dripping with white blooms, a *B. Mrs. W. A. Wallow*, a gorgeous *B. Luwalter* (a favorite of mine with its beautiful colored leaves), a *B. Rubaiyat* in bloom, *B. Scharffi* in bloom, *B. Neely Gaddis* given me by Mrs. Drew, and many others too numerous to mention.

On the back glass door leading to the garden in summer but never used in winter, I have three long glass shelves. This door faces the north. On these shelves are many Begonias. *B. Carlotta* with leaves like red velvet underneath and dark green on the top, round shaped with a slight concave to them, a beautiful *B. Gypsy Marie* with its reddest red leaves. *B. Braemar*, a small plant but doing well. Also on these shelves sit *B. Boweri*, no glass over it to keep the air humid since it is humid on the porch and sweet little *Boweri* is very happy out there, also *B. Boweri Major*, a little *B. Spaulding*, a miniature *B. Baby Brown*, *B. Richardsianna*, and *B. albo picta*.

My pride and joy, *B. Bunchi* sits on a glass topped table near the door. I had to transplant it this summer to a larger pot and it now spreads over twenty-four inches across each way, a perfectly round plant with its ruffled fluted leaves with their red tinted edge. A real beauty.

On a shelf along the back wall are *B. Erythophylla Helix*, *B. lobata variegata*, *B.*

—Continued on page 36

# Begonia Fusco . . .

Begonias of North America by Arthur D. Houghton furnishes a botanical description of *Begonia fusco*, for students wishing reference. This begonia is found from Southern Mexico to Central Guatemala, so he states.

Many inquiries have been received by this department for information concerning this plant and the following article and picture was furnished by Louise Schwerdtfeger who grows many of these begonias.

*Research Chairman*

According to the Kewensis Index, Page 285, *Begonia fusco* was first described by Leibmann in 1885 and the species had been discovered in Brazil.

Without giving the botanical description I shall try to describe *B. fusco* as I know it growing in my gardens.

The name *fusco* could easily have been taken from the Latin word *fuscus*, meaning dusky, tawny, grayish brown. If green were added, the word *fuscus* would definitely describe the color of the young leaf.

The Begonia is a hardy rhizomatous and needs only the usual requirements of the large leafed rhizomatous. The *B. fusco* pictured has been growing beneath lath, without benefit of heat, on a California hillside near the Pacific. The soft velvety appearance of the large round leaves makes it attractive and the young leaves are especially interesting. The huge cluster of bright blossoms held high above the foliage makes it a striking specimen. The entire plant is covered with short soft white hair giving it the velvet texture. It is not a compact grower and wisely so, for the texture, form

and size of the leaves would be lost. Five leaves are the most my plant has held at any one time.

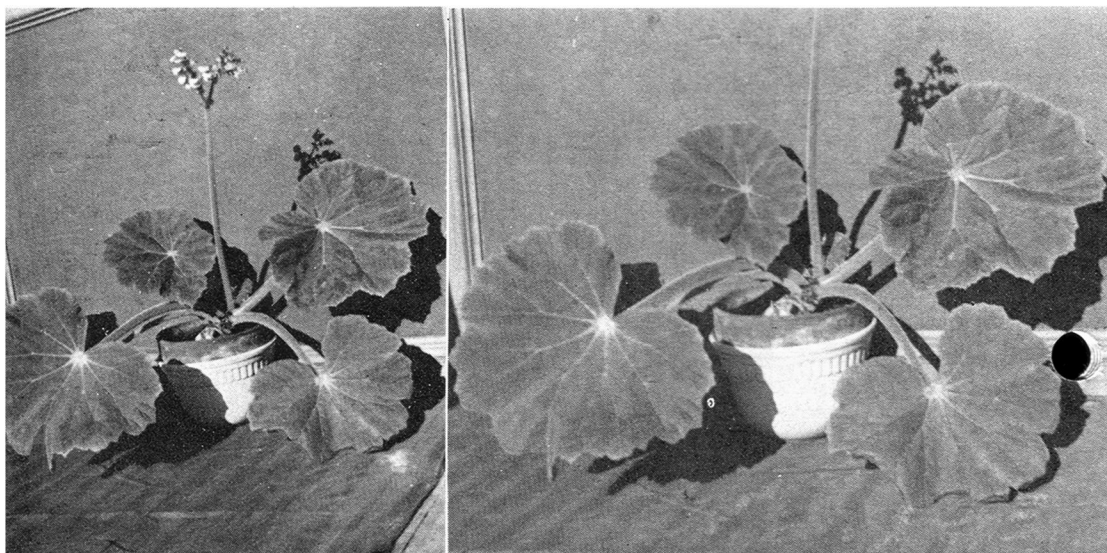
The rhizome is large and short between the nodes. It is over two inches in diameter and closely hugs the soil.

The leaves are palmately veined, all the main veins rising at once from the place where the foot-stock joins the blade, are like rays running out from the prominent whitish eye of the leaf, usual in this type of leaf formation.

The largest leaf measures thirteen inches across and eight inches long, making it a reniform, round kidney-shaped, broader than it is long. The margin is undulate, wavy, bending in and out around the entire leaf. The leaf stipules at the base are persistent and become brown and papery. The foot- or leaf-stock is approximately twelve inches long, stiff and nearly an inch in diameter at the base. As the leaf matures the stem bends gracefully under the weight. The young leaf is puckered into a soft rosette reminding one of a piece of tawny green panne-velvet. The tawny green is tinged with rose because the back of the leaf is tinted with rose-gray which fades as the leaf matures.

*B. fusco* blooms in the early spring and usually produces two or more clusters. The flower stem or peduncle is similar to the leaf-stock and grows upward to twenty inches or more. The flower cluster grows in the form of a CORYMB or flat-topped cluster. The peduncle divides in half, four or more times, to make the pedicels which

—Continued on Page 36





# Contest Winners

Prize Winner, F. C. QUINTANA

"As for telling how this plant might best be grown in a matter of fifty words . . . WGW! I sincerely question whether you could tell how to grow anything . . . even a mustache . . . in fifty words. The business of detailing how to best succeed with a plant is very much a different problem from explaining in fifty words why you like SCRUBBO SOAP . . . Nothing daunted, I'll try, but I've a lot more to say about the subject than what follows:

*"Boweri, like all Begonias, enjoys a potting mix high in organics. I use a mixture comprising equal parts leafmold, spent tanbark, compost, a half-part manure, and an eighth-part Sponge-Rok. Note—NO SOIL. This mix has excellent drainage, pH, resistance to decomposition, and my plants thrive in it. Feed liquid fertilizer monthly. Water mornings, spray and re-pot as needed.*

"Granting that you don't count articles, small prepositions and a couple connectives, I've got fifty words. I would like to have mentioned the fertilizers I use, and detail the feeding program. I should like to mention the sprays I find satisfactory, and a few general hints about watering. Ah well, a fifty-word limit is just that."

kindest regards.

F. C. Quintana, President,  
La Jolla Branch.

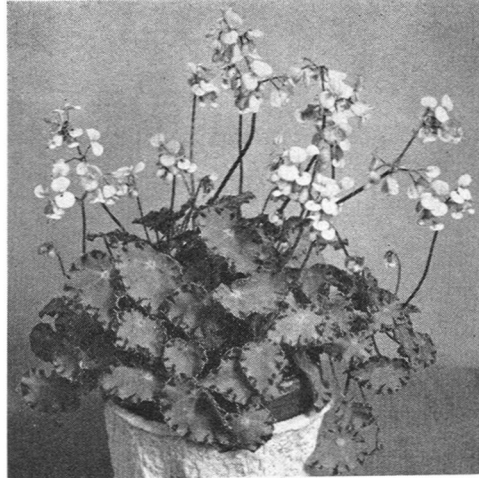
## OTHER REPORTS ON BOWERI

1. The Begonia pictured is BOWERI, a miniature begonia, known as the "Eyelash" Begonia from the red leaves fringed around the green chocolate-spattered leaves.

2. I plant mine in a terra cotta crock with hole for drainage. I use sandy soil with some leafmold, peat, steer manure and a little bonemeal. I set the flower pot in a shallow pan, with pebbles in bottom, covered with peat. Keep peat damp, and in north window.

(Mrs.) Mary Ball Pack,  
Box 20,  
Raven, Virginia

Begonia Boweri—This delicate little plant is a pampered glasshouse darling. Responsive to attention, dainty in size, and with corresponding appetite, she prefers eating



—Courtesy Logee's Greenhouses

and drinking only half as often as her companion begonias. She enjoys close neighbors, but insists on having her fair share of space and light.

Mrs. Sid Cohan,  
9007 2nd Avenue  
Inglewood, California

As a window-sill gardener, I've found Boweri does well back away from a West window. Watered twice a week in summer, and almost every day in winter, when the air is dry, fog spraying twice a day for moisture. I use a weak manure for fertilizer every six weeks.

Mrs. Alice G. Whitney,  
517 Massachusetts Avenue  
Buffalo 13, New York.

Begonia Bowerii—Screen two tablespoons steer manure, one-half teaspoon superphosphate with enough oakleaf to fill a five inch fern pot. Water to keep soil damp, not wet. Feed with liquid fishmeal once each month. Plant grows well on north front here in Lafayette or in the kitchen during the winter.

Stuart and Virginia Smith  
3147 Stanley Boulevard  
Lafayette, California

The Begonia pictured in December contest is BOWERI miniature "eyelash" leaves light green chocolate markings, erect hairs at leaf margin, pale pink flowers.

Best method for growing is equal parts sand, steer manure and peat with sprinkling of bone meal and charcoal. Grow on dry side. Fibrous begonia.

Mrs. L. L. Zeigler  
Haylow, Georgia

# "Easy Gardening" . . .

—by GORDON BAKER LLOYD

## LESSON 4 — "LIFE IN THE SOIL"

**In Review** In our last lesson we talked about the need of plant food getting to the plant. As you no doubt are beginning to see, a great number of things enter into absorption of food, just besides seeing that it gets there on the ground. I hope you are also beginning to note that this chain of events is very important and that one link does not do the job by itself—that it takes all of them to make for good soil in the Begonia and shade area, as well as in the sun garden.

**Humus** Looking again at this chain, pictured in your first lesson, we are not into the link marked humus. Briefly, without getting too technical and for us home gardeners, humus is the resultant end of organic matter that has rotted down in the garden. In other words, when organic matter breaks all the way down so it can no longer be seen, humus is formed. It is in this humus that bacteria live the best and exist the best.

**What humus does** You can call humus the "golden key" that unlocks the storehouse in the garden. Why? Humus, and you do not buy it by the pound, helps to condition your soil to form better texture; it helps to let in air; it helps to hold moisture; and it of course creates bacterial life. In other words, soil without humus is sand; soil without the right amount of humus can also be heavy and unworkable. As soils get back the normal amount of humus they begin to function as normal soils.

**What happens to humus** I suppose we can say that humus gradually disappears from soil. It burns out. Therefore, it must be added to the soils by the home gardener. Normally in nature it is kept supplied by the dropping of leaves, the rotting of grasses, but in the backyard, and in depleted soils nature's method is overlooked and forgotten. We rake up leaves, we see that nothing accumulates in the way of debris, so we must add humus in some other way.

**How do you supply humus?** Humus is added by adding forming materials. This is done by adding various forms of organic matter. This is not the place to discuss what forms are best, but to suggest only those things that you can add and what they do in the soil when they are added. Some, I admit, fit the pocketbook better than others. The *manures*, which are the easiest to get and use, add humus but often disappear quickly. When they are added, they add some plant food to the soil, some more than others, but are soon burned out of the soil. Some are higher in humus value than others, while others have more food value than just the common horse or cow manure. *Leaf mold*, when first added to the soil does little except to correct the soil physically. It takes some time for it to rot down and to form the things we need in the soil. At first it keeps the soil from packing, and helps to let in air. Be sure leaf mold used is free from disease and from any harmful insects.

*Peat moss*, in sacks or by the bale, eventually forms humus, but at first it holds moisture in the soil, gives content to sandy soil and breaks apart heavy soil. Some peats are more further rotted than others and may carry some bacteria. The food value of the average peat moss is low, not peat humus, and the pH is on the acid side which helps in keeping shade plants in the right pH. It may be the expense of peat will come into consideration with some gardeners. Peat lasts a long time in the soil and is tops for potting mixes. I would not be without peat in mixes, soil conditioning or in mulching.

*Compost*, that is made by you and I, certainly cannot be topped as an organic. We find that it will contain food value in relation to how good the plant was that we put into the pile. We find that we can add some food to the compost as it is being made, which adds to the food value of the material. Compost in its fine stage is almost in humus

form. In its coarse stage it will do no more than actual leaf mold. The difference between the two, being that compost is made up of many things, while the average leaf mold may contain one leaf in greater amount with other materials gathered as it is taken from its source. The average compost can be sifted to use in finer mixes. It will contain lots of bacteria and life, is generally on the acid side, in good pH for all gardening.

Next Month — "HOW MUCH AND HOW TO APPLY HUMUS

## Tuberous Begonias . . .

—MRS. W. W. HEGINBOTHAM

I saw an article in your November *BEGONIAN* about tuberous begonias and how to keep the bulbs over winter that I had written to you several years ago. Since that time I have learned some more about the storage of them in this locality.

I have a neighbor who raised quite a number of them last year and when she lifted them in the fall after tops were frozen, she left what ground clung to the roots on them. She did not remove the tops, she laid them up on a shelf or table in her cellar, or basement, and this last spring at planting time they were all sprouted. They were all good but 2 or 3.

This cellar does not have any heat in it. It is also warm enough that it does not freeze in winter. I have not tried this way of keeping them myself, as I have a furnace in my cellar. I also have another friend who just had 4 or 5 bulbs and she took them out of the ground after tops froze. She took

loose ground off them and laid them on top of ground of one of her large plants in her sun porch and they kept good all winter. This would apply to our Eastern climate where we get three or four months of very cold weather with snow and ice in winter.

I also had another friend who had two bulbs that were planted *REAL CLOSE* to her cellar wall and one lived over all winter in ground and came up in spring. This cellar has furnace heat all winter with a fire that never goes out at any time and ground where these were planted faces to South and is slightly elevated and well drained. It is worth giving all these methods a trial in the Eastern states.

You can print this in your magazine if you care to.

*Very truly yours,*

Mrs. William C. Heginbotham  
Saxonburg, Pennsylvania

## From the President . . .

Another month is here, and once again I have a few thoughts that I would like to express. The activities of the society seem to be going along smoothly now, and the cooperation and response of the membership in general is excellent. We are picking up many new members, which pleases all of us very much, and shows that the interest in Begonias and the Society is increasing.

However, there is one department in our Society that I think many of us are overlooking. I know that all of us enjoy reading our *BEGONIAN* each month and looking for new and interesting articles, but we must remember that this magazine needs material and articles from all of us in order to continue to be of interest. It is almost impossible for our editor, or for any one person, to do this job without material assistance from the rest of the membership. I believe that Mr. Lloyd has done a good job as editor, considering the lack of material and finances, and I know that any constructive criticism will be appreciated. Your notes and articles on shade plants or society happenings will help to increase the interest in our magazine a great deal.

This is the time of the year that we all begin to think of the coming flower shows, and planning for them. We are feeding and repotting our plants, and undoubtedly thinking of the many hours of work and enjoyment ahead. In doing this, let us all keep in mind our annual convention this summer. Vow to participate to our utmost, whether we live close by or out-of-state, and help make this convention the biggest and best yet.

## Begonias in New Jersey

—Continued from Page 31

Sunderbruchi with leaves 9x10 in., also *B. pyramidalis* (a plant sent this summer from Calif.) and a beautiful *B. Joe Hayden*.

Hanging from four ceramic baskets are—first a *B. Marjorie Daw*—it takes up the full window at which it hangs (not in bloom yet, but soon will be). Next to that is my *B. manicata aureo maculata crispa* with 16 large leaves, green and white with crisp ruffled pink tinged edge. A very beautiful plant. At the other end of the porch is my *B. Orange Rubra* in full bloom. Next to this is *B. manicata aureo maculata*. This is a huge plant and gorgeous. On another table is my lovely *B. Spotted Medora* and surrounding it are 10 different Rex Begonias none the worse for the bitter cold weather. Intermingled with my begonias are geraniums which I took up from the garden this summer and they also have continued to bloom.

Now, what do I do to make them grow? First I see that they never get entirely dry. When they get fairly dry I really water every plant well until I see the water come from the bottom of the pot. I feed them every month. Just a little of either fish meal, epsoma or Orthogro dissolved in water, about one teaspoonfull to a gallon of water. I give most of the credit to the Vita-Ray glass in the winter and the grateful shade of a large Queen Ann cherry tree in my yard in the summer. This tree shades the porch. No matter what engagements I

have, my plants are never neglected and I am very careful of the watering. In fact, my collection has grown so that the enclosed porch which used to be our main place to sit on winter days so we could watch the birds in the yard has now only room for two chairs. I spend about an hour every morning with my plants—and love every minute of it, but my Begonias come first.

## Begonia Fusco

—Continued from Page 32

carry the blossoms, and at each division there is a pair of over-lapping sepals tinged with rose that remain on the pedicels. The lower pedicels are much longer than the uppermost and the cluster takes the form of a six-inch triangle, lying almost horizontally. The male flowers appear first, above the fourth or fifth division, with two large petals of the softest clear rosy-pink a deeper color at the base and a lighter shade on the inside. The stamens are many and form a tight cluster of bright yellow. The female flowers form directly beneath each male blossom and develop after the male flowers fall. Thus forming a second cluster and prolonging the flowering period.

*B. fusco* being a hardy rhizomatous, interesting in form, an unusual plant and new on the Western Begonia markets, it would make an attractive addition to anyone's begonia collection or shade garden.

These Begonias were seen as Specimen Plants at our 1954 Convention — Photos Courtesy G. W. Motschman:

B. American Beauty

B. Argentea Guttata



# Mildew Problem . . .

"Powdery mildew is still the number one problem for begonia growers. Prior to 1951, tuberous begonias were comparatively free of ills, and everyone found it a pleasure to grow them, but now, many of these who had room for only a few of these plants have discarded them, as plants covered with mildew are rather unsightly.

Since 1951, a number of fungicides and dusts have appeared on the market, most of them useful in preventing or controlling mildew. By weekly applications of sulphur, copper dusts and/or fungicides containing captan, I have been able to maintain a respectable looking group of begonia plants. However, it is necessary to renew applications of whatever one uses at least once a week, because of the new growth which forms within that time and which is necessarily unprotected. When waiting longer than a week, especially if the weather is fairly warm, mildew makes its reappearance.

In the 1955 catalogs of two of our most prominent growers, the mildew problem is treated rather lightly and one is led to believe that preventive dusting with sulphur twice per month until blossom time and a copper dust from then on is completely effective. Our experience in San Francisco shows that until the end of June, there is little sign of mildew, even on plants which were not dusted, but that from then on it gets progressively worse, until in September, when weekly treatment is necessary.

I believe that it is time that someone

should begin the development of a mildew resistant or mildew proof strain of tuberous begonias. This has been done with other flowers when they were threatened with loss of popularity or even extinction, for example, rust proof snapdragons and wilt-resistant asters.

This should not be a difficult problem, because even now, I have certain begonia plants which are so far mildew-proof. They do not get mildew even when placed between infected plants, and all plants produced from cuttings of mildew-proof plants are also mildew proof. Plants without mildew one year have always been mildew free the following year, and usually about 25 per cent of the plants in any group will not develop mildew.

An interesting program would be to grow seed from mildew proof parent plants to see if the seedlings were also mildew proof. So far as I know, this has not been tried, and there is no way of knowing whether or not the mildew-proof plants are capable of transmitting this trait to their offspring.

Another method would be to grow seedlings and not take any of the usual precautions to prevent mildew, and then to discard all those plants which become infected.

It is my firm belief, that unless something is done soon to make our tuberous begonias mildew-proof or even mildew-resistant, they will lose the popularity they so rightly deserve.

—by WILLIAM G. DAMEROW

# Tuberous Begonias . . .

FROM A TALK BY RUDOLPH ZIESENHENNE

—Reported by LOUISE CRAMER

The Tuberous Begonia, coming from a swelled fleshy stem which is called a tuber, was first discovered by Mr. Waddell of Bolivia at about 14,000 feet (above timber line). He called it *boliviensis*, a long slender leaved plant with an orange red, four long-petaled flower. This is a far cry from the beautiful hybrids (sometimes with blooms eight inches across) which have been developed from it and grown in Europe and the beautiful rose and camellia types perfected in California.

Tuberous Begonias come from high in

the mountains where they can withstand cold and drought. They grow best in California in the cool, moist coastal regions. They can be grown inland if they are given sufficient humidity, strong filtered sunlight and protection from dry winds. They are at their best below 80 degrees. Their flowering is based on the amount of light they receive and commercial growers have found that with shortening daylight hours, one hour of artificial light at 2:00 a.m. does more than several hours in the evening "to shoot

—Continued on Page 44

# Superba Seedling Begonias . . .

These Begonias aren't so new, as I grew them from seed about the year 1935. But little has been known or said about them.

I belonged to several "Begonia club circles." Members in these clubs were from East Coast to West Coast and in several different states. One member lived in Hawaii. Mrs. Eva K. Gray of Pacific Beach, California, a writer and rare Begonia grower was president of some of these clubs. She was also a pen friend of mine. In these clubs we exchanged slips of Begonias and seeds, also told how best to grow Begonias and the soil best suited for them.

I asked Eva Gray if she had any *B. diadema* seeds that I could try. She said there was ONE seed pod ripened on *B. diadema* she thought was Clemantine . . . she sent me this ripened seed pod.

I prepared my soil, sandy loam, woods dirt, and some sand. I sifted soil, put in a 5-inch jar and scalded the soil to kill weed seeds.

When nearly dry, I took a little of this dirt, mixed the begonia seeds in it, and sprinkled over top of soil in the jar. I turned a glass over this and set the jar in an East window on my sun porch.

When it needed water, I poured a very little rain water around edge of jar, never lifting the glass. In a very short time, about 10 days I believe, the little plants began to show up. Soon they had 2 to 4 leaves and were ready to transplant.

I transplanted them in the same kind of soil, always keeping a glass over them to keep the temperature even. I noticed that every one of these little plants looked different. I only succeeded in growing five of these Begonias. Two of them looked quite a bit alike. One of these I sent to Eva Gray, the other I kept.

Mrs. Gray suggested I name three of them for my granddaughters. She wanted me to name one for her "Lolita Gray." This I did. She named the one I sent her "Elva Swisher" for the grower of these Begonias. Ones named for granddaughters are: "Alma Millikin," short broad, green leafed Begonia, with silver over almost the entire leaf. Flowers are a lovely pink.

"Janice Millikin," a very long narrow green leafed one with splashes of silver, flowers a lovely pink shade.

"Patty Jean Millikin," a dark leafed one. Leaves not too large, rather long. This has

splashes of silver over the dark red leaves—very pretty. Flowers are pink. It grows tall, almost like a vine.

One I named for Mrs Gray — "Lolita Gray" is a beautiful Begonia, dark blood red leaves, rather large odd shaped leaves—hard to describe their shape. Covered all over with silver spots. Often the tip of leaf is pink. This Begonia grows quite large and requires a whole window when reaching maturity.

This may be the only Begonia named for our beloved "Lolita Gray," and it should be prized very highly.

(This is written by the grower or originator of these five begonias)

Elva Swisher  
or Mrs. Ross Swisher,  
Sycamore Greene Co., Pa.

## Windowsill Report

Dear Mr. Lloyd:

In answer to your request for Begonias grown inside the house.

I am a window-sill gardener, living in a small heated apartment. It is not as easy to have healthy plants as when we lived in the cottage and controlled our own heat. But I am learning. We have been here a year and I believe I received as much enjoyment in window-sill gardening as a real outside gardener does.

I had a hundred and twenty five named and twenty-five unnamed begonias when we moved. Last June's inventory, a hundred and seven named and fifteen unnamed.

Due to illness this summer I lost all but the following, but hope to replace them.

1 Adora Alba, 1 Alpha Gere, 1 Alzasco, 1 *angularis*, 2 Ballet, 1 Bessie Buxton, 2 Bow Arriola, 2 Bow *Nigra*, 2 Carlton Bizarre, 2 Carlton Delight, 2 Carlton Flame, 2 Carmen, 1 *coccinea* (red), 2 Digswelliana, 1 *epipsila*, 2 Goldilocks, 1 Jennie May, 3 Joe Hayden, 1 Kellermani, 1 *macrocarpa*, 3 New Hampshire, Paul Brandt, 2 Pied Piper, 2 Red Cameilla, 1 Sara-belle, 2 Snowdrop, 2 Spaulding, 1 Veitchi (Carmine), 1 Manda's Wooly Bear, 1 Zeebowman, 1 Medora, 1 Two Pinks.

48 named Begonias and 12 unnamed.

Mrs. A. G. Whitney  
517 Massachusetts Avenue  
Buffalo 13, New York

# The Membership Asks . . .

"May I welcome you as editor? I like your start with the November issue. Apparently you plan to give us more helpful information and less chitchat. Were I an old-timer I probably would not stress information so much—but I am a rank beginner—struggling to acquire enough information for proper cultivation of twenty-odd varieties of rhizomatous and fibrous Begonias recently acquired (since March 1954) as young plants in two-inch pots.

(1) Best season of year for propagation of winter blooming varieties. (For example, I found a *B. Crestabruchi* in the shop of a little hole-in-the-wall florist who had sadly neglected it through ignorance. The plant has about five branches to the rhizome and I feel that it should be re-potted and divided but hesitate for fear this is the wrong season for the operation. None of my reference books give me a satisfactory answer).

(2) Discussion of products such as Actumus. Should they be used on Begonias? Why? What are they? (I know what the manufacturers say they are).

(3) Information that would help a beginner in selecting and planning a collection of Begonias. Helen Krauss does list suggestions for beginners, but I am ready to go beyond her list. For one thing, I would like to assemble a collection for continuous bloom during the winter months. Nowhere have I found more than casual mention of blooming seasons. Montague Free (*All About House Plants*) comes nearest to the list I have in mind, but he only lists about six Begonias. I sure would like to have a list of Begonias that would show the month in which they might be expected to bloom.

(4) Information about the use of artificial light in particular as *affecting Begonias*. This should be a subject of increasing interest to old-timers as well as beginners. A lot has been said about the use of Fluorescent light on African Violets—Ernest Chabot electric lights and long-day and short-days—the last issue of *Flower Grower* had an interesting article on use of both incandescent and Fluorescent light—but nobody ever says anything about the effect of electric light on Begonias. *Flower Grower* magazine reports that Dr. O. Wesley Davidson (Rutgers University) has done "some really outstanding work on the practical use of

artificial lights for house plants." Sure would be great if we could get him to give us an article slanted toward Begonias.

Mr. Lloyd, please forgive me if my own ignorance has caused me to make foolish suggestions—but I joined A.B.S. because my ignorance loaded me with foolish questions. I often go to Missouri Botanical Gardens and pester them with fool questions (they were unable to answer my questions about artificial light).

Please know that I wish you every success during your term as editor and hope that the only thing ever thrown your way are bouquets (no dead cats).

Ben F. Ingram,  
Saint Louis, Missouri

## Sheltered Garden Book Review...

SUCCESSFUL BEGONIA CULTURE, Fredrick J. Bedson. W.H. & L. Collingridge Ltd. 84 p. \$2.25.

Tuberous Begonias as well as all other types, will be better understood by beginners and advanced growers after reading the background history of our favorite plant.

English growers are prone to specialize in growing the tuberous types, because there is no problem in winter care. Mr. Bedson, the Founder President of the National Begonia Society of England and Wales, is attempting to encourage the growing of other types of begonias by explaining their comparative ease of culture. As this cultural advice is also applicable to many areas in the United States, it will also be a welcome handbook for Americans.

The easy to read and easy to understand contents of this hard-bound volume will be of help to all begonia fans.

The twelve pages of photographs of many Begonias in England, are very lovely illustrations of our beloved plants and the seven line drawings are exceptionally well done. This is a handsome book by one of our own A.B.S. members, a member of the Nomenclature Committee that has contributed some very fine articles to the *BEGONIAN*.

If your favorite bookseller has not received their supply, contact the A.B.S. Librarian for your copy.—D.S.B.

# BRANCH HAPPENINGS

## Philbegonia Branch

What magic the word Christmas can hold—meeting each month as we do we enjoy our study of Begonias and our renewing of Friendships as we meet—but Christmas adds just a little something — an undefineable something not to be soon forgotten. Christmas means that God blesses everyone with human fellowship at it's best—he gives us the privilege of enjoying with others not only possessions but Happiness—and we seem to sense this in it's deepest meaning at Christmas time—as we held our December meeting which was at the home of Mrs. D. Senseman in Merchantville, N.J. This very special feeling prevailed as we enjoyed the lovely lunch prepared by Mrs. Senseman—then our business meeting at which time election of officers took place. Our members voted to re-elect the same staff as had served the previous year, namely: Mrs. Elsa Fort, President; Mrs. C. Bailey, Vice-President; Mrs. Helen York, Secretary and Treasurer. Mrs. Fort then appointed Mrs. Anna Reuter, Program Chairman; Mrs. A. Paschall, Chaplain; Mrs. S. E. DeCou, National Director. We then devoted a short time to our program for the day B. Schmidiana. At the close of the program gifts were given out, opened and enjoyed together.

Our Branch December meeting was indeed in the Spirit of Christmas—God grant that same Spirit of Christmas abide with us all through the coming year.

Sally E. De Cou  
National Director.

## San Gabriel Valley Reports

—by Louise Cramer

"People and Plants of Central America and the Caribbean," a travelogue in color, was given by Miss Peggy Sullivan, noted West Los Angeles landscape architect on January 26 at our branch.

Miss Sullivan, a vivacious young lady, attended U.C.L.A., Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley specializing in horticulture and entomology. She has the distinction of being the first woman in the Los Angeles County Plant Quarantine Service. Peggy is garden consultant on the staff of "Sunset" magazine and writes for the Los Angeles Times.

For a successful landscaping project, Peggy states the client's desires are of the utmost consideration. The amount of garden work he wants to do or pay a gardener to

do, the need for privacy, sun or wind protection, place for play, entertaining and service all must be ascertained before a project is begun. The garden must be enticing to enter and the living area comfortable and convenient. After the job is completed it should reflect the owner's personality and not a "landscape done by." He must be imbued with a greater enthusiasm for gardening, because he is personally informed about the feeding, watering and pruning care of each plant. Success in her business, which is wholly referred, she attributes to keeping errors to a minimum by personal plant selection and on the job planting guidance while her crew does the work. Plants should be of the size to stand on their own and acclimate themselves to the new environment.

One of the worst problems involved in landscaping, is the desire of an owner to fill an area immediately, not considering the size of a mature plant.

Another problem is the home owner, so desirous of growth, that shrubbery is allowed to grow so rank without proper pruning, the architectural design of a home is lost. Landscaping compliments a home, not detracts from it. Each year Peggy takes a trip photographing in color and studying their growth and habits the plants in their native habitat so she may serve her clients better. In this trip taken during late August and September, she climbed volcanoes in Costa Rica, studying plants from freezing high elevations, rain, forests and hot tropics. Cattelyas were seen growing on tree trunks. The residents of Costa Rica transplanted them to the tile roofs of their homes where they grow in gay profusion.

In Trinidad, she enjoyed the mango fruits but ran into a yellow fever epidemic. Porto Rico was too American with its bulldozers and freeways. Haiti reflected the opposite influence with its primitive and basic way of life. The African natives who spoke a soft French, wore practically no clothes in this dry country. The native drums beat constantly day and night.

In Jamaica, the gigantic philodendron leaves were large enough to hide behind and the bamboo forests were tremendous. Bromeliads which grow in two-inch pots in our greenhouses, grow on tree trunks in Santa Cruz, 40 to 50 feet in the air. Tree ferns of all types have trunks like our telephone poles and fronds are from 7 to 9 feet long. The most exciting moment in her trip came while riding down the wagon trail with a native driver. When they came upon a vision of three foot epidendrum radicans blooming above 18-inches high thick grass. After traveling miles along the Pan American Highway running along deserted mountain tops, thousands of epidendrum and



oncidiums were found growing in dirt, rocks and on trees at an elevation of two miles. The native drivers thought her group was "crazy" stopping to look at the orchids and climbing up the trees to get specimens.

Jack Koebig, National President of the American Begonia Society, installed the following officers to guide the San Gabriel Valley branch for the coming year: President, W. G. McIntyre; Vice-President, Lillian Steinhaud; Secretary, Dorothy DeHart.

## San Francisco Reports

The guest speaker at the January meeting of the San Francisco Branch was Mr. Kerr, of the Kerr-Langen Seed Co., San Mateo. He spoke on "Winter Gardening" and stressed the fact that for Bay Area gardeners, winter was no time for hibernating. Many of our plants continue to bloom all winter, and so need care and attention. Then this is a good time to do something about garden pests. For the control of red spider, he recommended the addition of one tablespoon of malathion to a gallon of spray, for the control of earwigs, chlorodane dust, and for lawn moths 10 pounds of ammonium phosphate and two lbs. 50% DDT per 1000 square feet of lawn. This he said would keep out lawn moths for about 18 months. He also recommended the use of iron chelates in the potting mix for most plants.

One thing he emphasized in speaking of the control of powdery mildew on begonias was that it is necessary to dust or spray about every week. We have a number of effective sprays and dusts that control mildew and prevent its appearance on the parts of the plant covered. However, the spores are airborne and so continue to settle on the plants and will start infecting any untreated parts. What many growers forget, is that the plants grow quite rapidly and in a weeks time new growth of leaves and buds have appeared and these are not protected by the spray or dust on the old growth, and on this new growth is where the mildew infection begins.

Mr. Kerr's talk was excellent and was enjoyed by all present.

Mr. Carl F. Meyer, one of our members then spoke about growing Tuberous Begonias from seed. He made reference to numerous articles which had appeared in past issues of the Begonian on this subject, and then gave his method. First, as a starting medium he preferred fresh oak leaf mold, that is, leafmold not previously used. This he then sterilizes by pouring boiling water over it (live steam, if available, is better), as he prefers this to baking the soil or leafmold. Baking seems to cause the formation of ammonia which causes poor seed germination. He uses a shallow flower pot as a

container, placing first a layer of broken pottery in the bottom, then a layer of pea gravel, then leafmold screened through a 1/2-inch screen, and then on top a thin layer of finely sifted leafmold. This is watered from below by setting in a larger container of water. The seed is mixed with fine sand and then spread by use of a pepper shaker to insure even distribution. The pot is covered with a pane of glass and over this is placed some paper to keep the pot dark. This is kept at a temperature of about 70 degrees F. until the seed germinates, when the paper is removed and light is admitted.

William G. Damerow,  
*Publicity Director*

## Party at Fortuna

A Christmas party and turkey dinner were enjoyed by 40 members and guests of the Humboldt County Branch of the American Begonia Society on December 13 at Hospitality House in Fortuna.

Mrs. Guy Wooden installed the new officers who are:

Miss Elsie Randall .....President  
Mr. Arthur Byerly.....Vice-President  
Miss Margaret .....Secretary-Treasurer  
Mrs. Franklin Popke and

Mrs. W. A. Searle .....Directors

Mrs. Wooden presented each officer with a corsage she made of Epidendrum O'Brien orchids she grew herself. There was a gift exchange.

Mr. Frank Kemp presented each member with a choice hybrid lilly bulb, in appreciation for all the co-operation given him this past year while he was president.

Thank you, Sincerely—

Mrs. W. A. Searle (Inez)  
*Publicity Chairman*

## New Branch Officers Elected

### SAN GABRIEL BRANCH

Mr. W. G. McIntyre .....President  
Mrs. Lee Steinhaus .....Vice-President  
Mrs. Dorothy DeHart .....Secretary  
Mrs. Ward Pennington .....Treasurer  
Mr. Howard Small.....Local Board Director  
Mrs. Merwyn Cramer  
.....National Board Director

### SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH—

Mrs. John H. Smith .....President  
Mr. Donald Thomas .....President-Elect  
Mrs. Edward O'Brien .....Secretary  
Mr. Orris R. Martin .....Treasurer  
Mr. James Miller  
Member Board of Directors (2 years)  
Mrs. Dan Buckley  
Member Board of Directors (1 year)  
Mr. William G. Damerow  
.....Director to National Board

Editor .....Gordon Baker Lloyd, Box 337, San Gabriel, Calif.  
Advertising Manager .....Emri Stoddard, 768 Avenue B, Redondo Beach, California

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For dues, Address Changes, or Magazines . . . write to Membership Secretary, Box 2544 Los Angeles 54, California. Branch members pay dues to branch.

## Aims and Purposes of the American Begonia Society, Inc.

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.

### OFFICERS

President .....Jack E. Koebig  
2717 Monterey Street, Torrance, Calif.  
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Ways & Means Chairman ..... Joe Taylor  
301 Anita Street, Redondo Beach, Calif.  
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Secretary ..... Mrs. Arline Stoddard  
768 Avenue B, Redondo Beach, Calif.  
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Vice-Pres., 1 year.....Mrs. Ruthanne Williams  
2160 Stacia Way, Sacramento, Calif.  
Vice-Pres., 2 yrs.....Mrs. Louise Schwerdtfeger  
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1325 Thomas Blvd., Port Arthur, Texas

Research Director .....Mrs. Edna L. Korts  
3628 Revere Ave., Los Angeles 39, Calif.

Seed Fund .....Mrs. Florence Gee  
4316 Berryman Ave., Los Angeles 66, Calif.

Advertising Manager .....Emri I. Stoddard  
768 Avenue B, Redondo Beach, Calif.

Chairman of Awards Committee  
Mrs. Dorothy S. Behrends  
1633 Golden Gate Ave., Los Angeles 26, Calif.

Parliamentarian .....Sam Scult  
26938 Dapple Gray Lane, Rolling Hills, Calif.

# National A. B. S. Convention . . .

Redondo Area Branch desires to announce that the 1955 23rd Annual Convention and Flower Show will be held on August 12, 13 and 14, at the South Bay Union High School, corner of Pacific Coast Highway (101) and Diamond Street, Redondo Beach, California.

This is the same site as the very successful 1953 Convention from which we are still receiving reports about visitors being unable to find the place. Rest assured that adequate signs will be erected so no one, with or without glasses, will miss it IF they stay on Pacific Coast Highway through Redondo Beach.

In general the program will be as follows:

August 12th—All Flower Show exhibits and entries must be in and completed by 11:00 a.m.

Judging—1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Preview and Reception—7:00 p.m.  
(Registration 50c)

August 13th—Flower Show open 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., admission 50c)

Annual Business Meeting—2:00 p.m.

Annual A.B.S. Banquet and Installation—6:30 p.m.

August 14th—Flower Show open 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Admission 50c.

This is the first of a series of reports to be made. Details regarding the various activities will be reported as soon as decisions are made. **Included herewith is a list of committee members with addresses, should you desire information about any certain activity, please write directly to the one responsible to get you most prompt and accurate reply.**

The theme or decor of the Flower Show will be Rustic. Natural wood fencing is to be used in front of all booth exhibits to keep the curious out. All show personnel will be in costume to conform—blue denim Jeans, gingham, etc. All exhibitors are requested to plan their displays with natural materials. It is our desire to make this display with as little artificial aid showing as possible.

Please make all checks, money orders, etc., payable to Redondo Area Branch, A.B.S. We wish to again remind you that if you do not receive the information in forthcoming reports that you desire, write directly to the committee member responsible. Following is a list of committee members and their responsibilities.

Convention Manager .....	Joe Taylor
	301 Anita St., Redondo Beach, Calif.
Snack Bar .....	Ruth Taylor
	301 Anita St., Redondo Beach, Calif.
Secretary .....	Lucy Sault
	26938 Dapple Gray Lane, Rolling Hills, Calif.
Housing .....	Sam Sault
	26938 Dapple Gray Lane, Rolling Hills, Calif.
Treasurer .....	Lillian Peters
	1213 W. 127th St., Los Angeles 24, Calif.
Signs .....	Elston Peters
	1213 W. 127th St., Los Angeles 24, Calif.
Flower Show.....	Weston & Dione Williamson
	1400 9th St., Manhattan Beach, Calif.
Banquet .....	Lucille Terry
	2314 Harriman Lane, Redondo Beach, Calif.
Publicity .....	Mae Koebig
	2717 Monterey St., Torrance, Calif.
Brochure .....	Emri Stoddard
	768 Avenue B, Redondo Beach, Calif.
Hostesses .....	Arline Stoddard
	768 Avenue B, Redondo Beach, Calif.
Registration .....	Emma Wiltse
	204 So. Catalina Avenue Redondo Beach, California
Garden Tours .....	LeRoy Borchardt
	5150 W. 134th St., Hawthorne
Membership .....	Betty Borchardt
	5150 W. 134th St., Hawthorne
Ways and Means .....	Ella Cunningham
	2208 Vanderbilt Lane, Redondo Beach, Calif.
Business Meeting .....	Jack Koebig
	2717 Monterey St., Torrance, Calif.
Nomenclature .....	Edna Korts
	3628 Revere Ave., Culver City, Calif.

—JOE TAYLOR,  
*Convention Manager*

## Our Cover . . .

This is the greenhouse of Mrs. Elsa Fort, Merchantville, New Jersey. The size is ten by eighteen and it is overflowing with Begonias. Mrs. Fort has been invited to stage a Begonia exhibit in the rooms of the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society, in Philadelphia, February 16 and 17 under the sign of the American Begonia Society. The sign over the door of her green house was made for her in the New England States.

Probably New Jersey is well banked with snow this time of the year, but Elsa will groom her plants and her station wagon will be well loaded for the show. We, in California, could learn a few lessons from a member like Elsa Fort.

# Clayton M. Kelly

## Seed Fund...

### CLOSE OUT ON FERN SPORES

We are offering these scarce and in some cases rare fern spores at a great discount. Some of these spores have sold for 50c, 75c and \$1.00 per packet, and cannot be purchased anywhere else at this low cost. We are offering them any four packets for \$1.00, as follows:

1. *Phyllitis cristata*—crested hart's tongue.
2. *Pallea adiantoides*—Basket—Maiden hair.
3. *Pelopodium Vulgare*—Basket—Also called wall fern.
4. *Polypodium Scoleri*—Basket.
5. *Pteris Distinction*.
6. *Pteris Albo-lineata*—Variegated pteris.
7. *Adiantum capillus veneris*—Venus's hair.
8. *Pyrosia cyclophorus*—*Polypodium lingua*.
9. *Pteris serrulata*.
10. *Scalopendrum crispum*—crested hart's tongue.
11. *Polypodium mandeanum*—Basket.
12. *Athyrium-felix-femina*—Lady fern.
13. *Blechnum occidentale*.
14. *Polystichum adiantiforme*—Maiden hair.
15. *Pellea hastata*.
16. *Cyrtium rochfordianum*—Holly fern.
17. *Phyllitis-Vulgare*—*Scolopendrum*.
18. *Microlepia platyphylla*.
19. Crested pteris.
20. *Polystichum capense*.
21. *Molle*—Lady fern.
22. *Davalia canaransis*.
23. *Platynerium bifurcatum*—Stag-horn.
24. *Cibotium chamissoi*—Hawaiian tree fern.

We suggest the following cultural directions which have proved to be successful. Planting medium consists of well rotted leaf mold. It should be sterile, porous and quite damp.

Place in a wide mouth jar which has a tight lid for a cover. Sprinkle spores on soil and seal tightly, set aside and let nature do the rest. The cover should remain on the jar until the tiny prothalli appear, then a little more air may be given when large enough to handle easily. The sporelings may be transplanted by the same method as begonia seedlings. Some fern spores are slow to germinate and should be placed where they are not disturbed and left alone.

In addition to the close out of fern spores we have mixed seeds of the glamorous Tuberous Begonia. Mixture consists of many colors and forms—basket and upright—and the German multiflora—low, compact with many blossoms. These two varieties have just come to us from Germany and we offer them in a collection of other tuberous varieties, six packets for \$1 as follows: No. 153 B. *Picta* tuberous, No. 112 B. *Josephi* tuberous and No. 119 B. *Boliviensis*. Another Begonia that has long been our favorite is B. Mexican species No. 38. Having grown this versatile plant for the past year, we have found it to be satisfactory in various ways. For example: it can be grown as a basket, on a trellis or totem pole, and is almost always covered with delightfully fragrant pink blossoms. The foliage is nice and remains on the plant during the winter months if given protection. Seeds of Mexican No. 38 are available with the following Mexican varieties, six packets for \$1.—No. 131 B. *Pluma Blanca*, No. 132 B. *Pinetorium*, No. 134 B. *Bonnie Jean* hybrid, No. 135 B. *Brooks Carlotta* and B. No. 143 *Pendant Jewels*.

We have just received Anthurium seed from the Hawaiian Islands—6 seeds for 50c.  
Mrs. Florence Gee,  
Seed Fund Administrator  
4316 Berryman Avenue,  
Los Angeles, California.

## Tuberous Begonias

—Continued from Page 37

the bloom.”

The common types are: *Lloydi*, with single, semi-double or double flowers which droop, making them ideal for baskets; the *Multiflora*, a garden favorite with strong erect stems with small double flowers in clusters; *Camellia*, the spectacular double as the name implies; *Crispa*, single or double blooms with wavy edges; *Crestata*, a single flower with edges so crested that they look like doubles; *Picotee*, edge has margin of different color; and the *Rosebud*, which looks like its namesake. The big “singles” from Germany are more vigorous and hold their heads erect without staking. They make a different and spectacular showing in a massed bed, but should not be mixed in a bed of doubles. In Mr. Ziesenhenné's garden you will find not only these common types, but many species, from pendicle types to rare raceames and his own hybrids. In the greenhouse, he is working with thousands of *Begonias*—fibrous, rhizomatus and rex, creating new hybrids with stronger qualities and easier for the amateur to raise.

# BRANCH MEETING DATES . . .

(Visitors always welcome at these meetings)

## AMERICAN BEGONIA

### HYBRIDIZER'S BRANCH

Called Meetings Quarterly.  
Mrs. Daisy L. Walker, Secy.-Treas.  
2425-A Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles 39, Calif.

### BRITISH BRANCH

F. J. Bedson, Secy.  
Kent, England

### CENTRAL FLORIDA BRANCH

1st Friday, Feb. 4, March 4, 10:00 a.m.  
Lounge, Florida Power Co.  
Winter Park, Fla.  
Mrs. Lou Mankamyer  
20 Pershing Place, Orlando, Fla.

### DALLAS COUNTY BRANCH, TEXAS

1st Thursday, Feb. 3, March 3, 7:00 p.m.  
Member's Residences  
Mrs. W. H. Buntin, Cor. Secy.  
3113 Parker Dr., Dallas, Texas

### EAST BAY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, Feb. 10, March 10, 7:45 p.m.  
Willard School, Telegraph at Ward  
Berkeley  
Mr. Stuart C. Smith, Secy.  
3147 Storley Blvd., La Fayette, Calif.

### EL MONTE COMMUNITY BRANCH

3rd Thursday, Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m.  
Wilmar Women's Clubhouse  
Emerson and Isabel Sts., South San Gabriel  
Mrs. Virginia Brandon, Secy.  
3012 W. Norwood Pl., Alhambra, Calif.

### FOOTHILL BRANCH

3rd Thursday, Feb. 17, 8:00 p.m.  
Weaver Home  
1349 E. Sierra Madre, Glendora  
Mrs. C. W. Hall, Cor. Secy.  
358 E. Arrow Hwy., Upland

### FORT ELSA BRANCH

1st Saturday, Feb. 5, March 5, 2:30 p.m.  
Miss Lola Price, Secy.  
628 Beech Ave., Laurel Springs, N. J.

### GLENDALE BRANCH

4th Wednesday, Feb. 23, 8:00 p.m.  
Tuesday Afternoon Club, 400 N. Central  
Mrs. Irma Brown, Cor. Secy.  
3633 Revere Ave., L. A. 39, Calif.

### GRAY EVA KENWORTHY BRANCH

3rd Monday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m.  
Community House, La Jolla  
Illie Genter, Cor. Secy.  
7356 Eads Ave., La Jolla, Calif.

### GRAYS HARBOR BRANCH

2nd Monday, Feb. 14, 8:00 p.m.  
Hoquiam Pub. Library, or Messingale &  
Rosenear Music Store, Aberdeen, Wash.  
Mrs. Jessie B. Hoyt, Secy.  
1013 Harding Road, Aberdeen, Wash.

### GRUENBAUM, MARGARET BRANCH

4th Tuesday, Feb. 22, 10:30 a.m.  
Home of Members  
Box Lunch 12:30, Program following  
Mrs. W. Ernest Jones, Secy.  
Welsh & Dresher Rds., Willow Grove, Pa.

### HOLLYWOOD BRANCH

3rd Wednesday, Feb. 16, 7:30 p.m.  
Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Mrs. Helen Ehret Murphy, Secy.  
715 Genesee Ave., Hollywood 46, Calif.

### HOUSTON TEXAS BRANCH

1st Friday, Feb. 4, March 4, 8:00 p.m.  
Garden Center, Herman Park  
Mrs. Grant Herzog, Secy.  
12600 Broken Bough, Houston 24, Tex.

### HUB CITY BRANCH

3rd Wednesday, Feb. 16, 7:30 p.m.  
3rd Wednesday, Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m.  
Rm. 19, Roosevelt Jr. High School  
1200 E. Olive St., Compton, Calif.  
Mrs. Kathryn Hodgson, Cor. Secy.  
813 S. Pannes, Compton

### HUMBOLDT COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Monday, Feb. 14, 8:00 p.m.  
Los Amigos Club, Loleta, Calif.  
Miss Margaret Smith, Secy.  
P.O. Box 635, Ferndale, Calif.

### INGLEWOOD BRANCH

1st Tuesday, Feb. 1, March 1, 8:00 p.m.  
American Legion Hall  
3208 W. 85th St., Inglewood 4, Calif.  
Mrs. Pearl Parker, Secy.  
726 W. 81st St., L. A. 44, Calif.

### LA MESA BRANCH

2nd Monday, Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m.  
Porter Park, University & La Mesa Blvd.  
Mrs. Lena Deem, Secy.  
9022 Grossmont Blvd., La Mesa, Calif.

### LONG BEACH PARENT BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, Feb. 8, March 8, 7:30 p.m.  
Fox Home at 2255 Elm Ave.  
Mrs. Alice Waldow, Secy.  
2175 Cedar Ave., Long Beach 5, Calif.

### LOS ANGELES BRANCH

4th Wednesday, Feb. 23 Homes of Members  
Mrs. Mildred Dunham, Secy.  
914 Howard St., Venice, Calif. W

### LOUISIANA CAPITAL BRANCH

2nd Thursday, Feb. 10, March 10, 7:00 p.m.  
Homes of Members  
Mrs. R. L. Wilkenson, Secy.  
5764 Robertson Ave., Baton Rouge, La.

### MIAMI FLORIDA BRANCH

4th Tuesday, Feb. 22, 8:00 p.m.  
Simpson Memorial Garden Center  
Mrs. Vivian J. Ennemoser, Secy.  
1295 N. W. 54th St., Miami 42, Fla.

### MISSOURI BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, Feb. 15, 7:00 p.m.  
American Legion Bldg., Linwood & Paseo  
Kansas City, Mo.  
Mrs. Lucille Taylor, Secy.  
4102 Euclid Ave., Kansas City 4, Missouri

### NEW ENGLAND BRANCH

3rd Saturday, Feb. 19, Home of Members  
Mrs. Lester H. Fox, Secy.  
170 Marsh Hill Road, Dracut, Mass.

### ORANGE COUNTY NEW JERSEY BRANCH

1st Monday, Feb. 7, March 7, 12:30 p.m.  
Members Homes  
Mrs. Gertrude Buek, Secy.  
Box 244, Bayville, N.J.

### ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, Feb. 8, March 8, 7:30 p.m.  
Grange Hall  
1 block South Center of Garden Grove, Calif.  
Mrs. Evie Darden, Secy.-Treas.  
6701 S. Fee Ana St., Rt. 3, Anaheim, Calif.

### PASADENA BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, Feb. 9, March 9, 8:00 p.m.  
Homes of Members  
Mrs. Alva Graham, Secy.  
515 E. Centro St., South Pasadena

**PHILOBEGONIA BRANCH**

2nd Friday, Feb. 11, Members Homes  
Mrs. Robert York, Secy.  
3311 Fremont St., Camden, N. J.

**PORTLAND, OREGON BRANCH**

4th Friday, Feb. 25, 8:00 p.m.  
Journal Bldg. Aud., Front & Yamhill Sts.  
Mrs. Altermatt, Secy.  
1104 S. E. 148th, Portland, Oregon

**RAYTOWN, MISSOURI BRANCH**

4th Tuesday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m.  
Homes of Members  
Mrs. Mildred Schorr, Secy.-Treas.

**REDONDO BEACH AREA**

4th Friday each month  
2308 Rockefeller, Redondo Beach, Calif.  
Mrs. Ella Cunningham, Secy.  
2405 Hill Lane, Redondo Beach, Calif.

**RIVERSIDE BRANCH**

2nd Wednesday, Feb. 9, March 9, 7:30 p.m.  
Shamel Park, 3650 Arlington, Riverside, Calif.  
Irene Springer, Secy.  
3608 Rossmuir, Riverside, Calif.

**ROBINSON, ALFRED D. BRANCH**

3rd Friday, Feb. 18, 10:30 a.m.  
Homes of Members  
Mrs. Merrel H. Taylor, Secy.  
4285 Sierra Vista, San Diego 3, Calif.

**SACRAMENTO BRANCH**

3rd Tuesday, Feb. 15, 7:00 p.m.  
Mrs. Gladys Pirkner, Secy.  
750 48th St., Sacramento, Calif.

**SALEM, OREGON BRANCH**

1st Tuesday, Feb. 1, March 1  
The Chapel, 685 Winter St., Salem  
Mrs. Loren H. Edlund  
863 Edina Lane, Salem, Ore.

**SAN DIEGO BRANCH**

4th Monday, Feb. 28  
Hard of Hearing Hall, Herbert & University  
Mrs. E. R. Bohe, Secy.  
3145 N. Mountain View, San Diego 15, Calif.

**SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH**

1st Wednesday, Feb. 2, March 2, 8:00 p.m.  
Forest Lodge  
266 Laguna Honda Blvd., San Francisco, Calif.  
Mrs. Edward O'Brien, Secy.  
234 Gates Street, San Francisco 10, Calif.

**SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH**

4th Wednesday, Feb. 23, 8:00 p.m.  
Masonic Temple, 506 S. Santa Anita Ave.  
Arcadia, Calif.  
Mrs. Dorothy De Hart, Secy.  
5329 No. Rosemead Blvd., San Gabriel, Calif.

**SANTA BARBARA BRANCH**

2nd Thursday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m.  
Girl Scout Clubhouse, 1838 San Andres St.  
Seth C. Langdon, Secy.  
1419 Quinientos, Santa Barbara, Calif.

**SEATTLE BRANCH**

3rd Tuesday, Feb. 15, 7:45 p.m.  
Trinity Parish House  
609 Eighth Avenue  
Mrs. H. G. Bamford, Secy.  
810 W. Lee St., Seattle 99, Wash.

**SHEPHERD, THEODOSIA BURR BRANCH**

1st Tuesday, Feb. 1, March 1, 7:30 p.m.  
Alice Bartlett C.H., 902 E. Main, Ventura  
Mrs. Wilma Renshaw, Secy.  
560 So. Coronado St., Ventura, Calif.

**SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY BRANCH**

3rd Thursday, Feb. 17, 8:00 p.m.  
Cafeteria, High School, Hayward, Calif.  
Bob Oliver, Corr. Secy.  
24115 Ida Lane, Hayward, Calif.

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**COPY DEADLINE:**

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All copy for the Begonian must be in the hands of the Editor by the 10th of month preceding publication.

**SOUTHGATE BRANCH**

4th Tuesday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m.  
Members' Homes  
Mrs. Jennie Hamilton, Secy.  
2501 Palm Pl., Huntington Park, Calif.

**TEXAS STATE BRANCH**

4th Friday, Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m.  
Rose Hill Club  
Mrs. Leoma Caudle, Secy.  
2822 8th St., Port Arthur, Texas

**WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH**

2nd Wednesday, Feb. 9, 11:00 a.m.  
Homes of Members  
Mrs. Joseph Rock, Corr. Secy.

**WESTERN RESERVE BRANCH**

**CLEVELAND, OHIO**  
4th Wednesday, Feb. 23, 8:00 p.m.  
Garden Center, 10013 Detroit St.  
Cleveland, Ohio  
Mrs. Edward Lobser, Cor. Secy.  
25912 Westlake Rd., Bay Village, Ohio

**WHITTIER BRANCH**

1st Thursday, Feb. 3, March 3, 7:30 p.m.  
Palm Park Community Center  
1643 W. Floral Drive  
Mrs. Alice E. Rose, Secy.  
13926 E. Close St., Whittier, Calif.

**WILLIAM PENN BRANCH, PA.**

3rd Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2:00 p.m.  
Homes of Members  
Wallingford, Pa.  
Mrs. Joseph B. Townsend, Jr., Secy.  
Baltimore Pike, Wawa, Pa.

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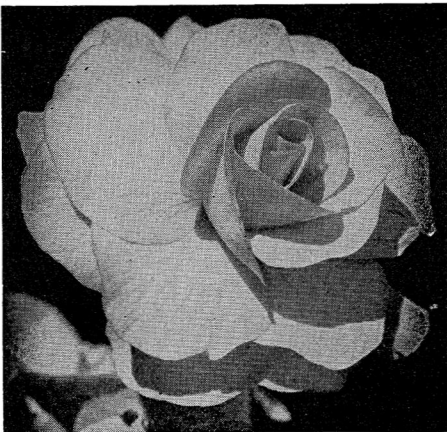
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