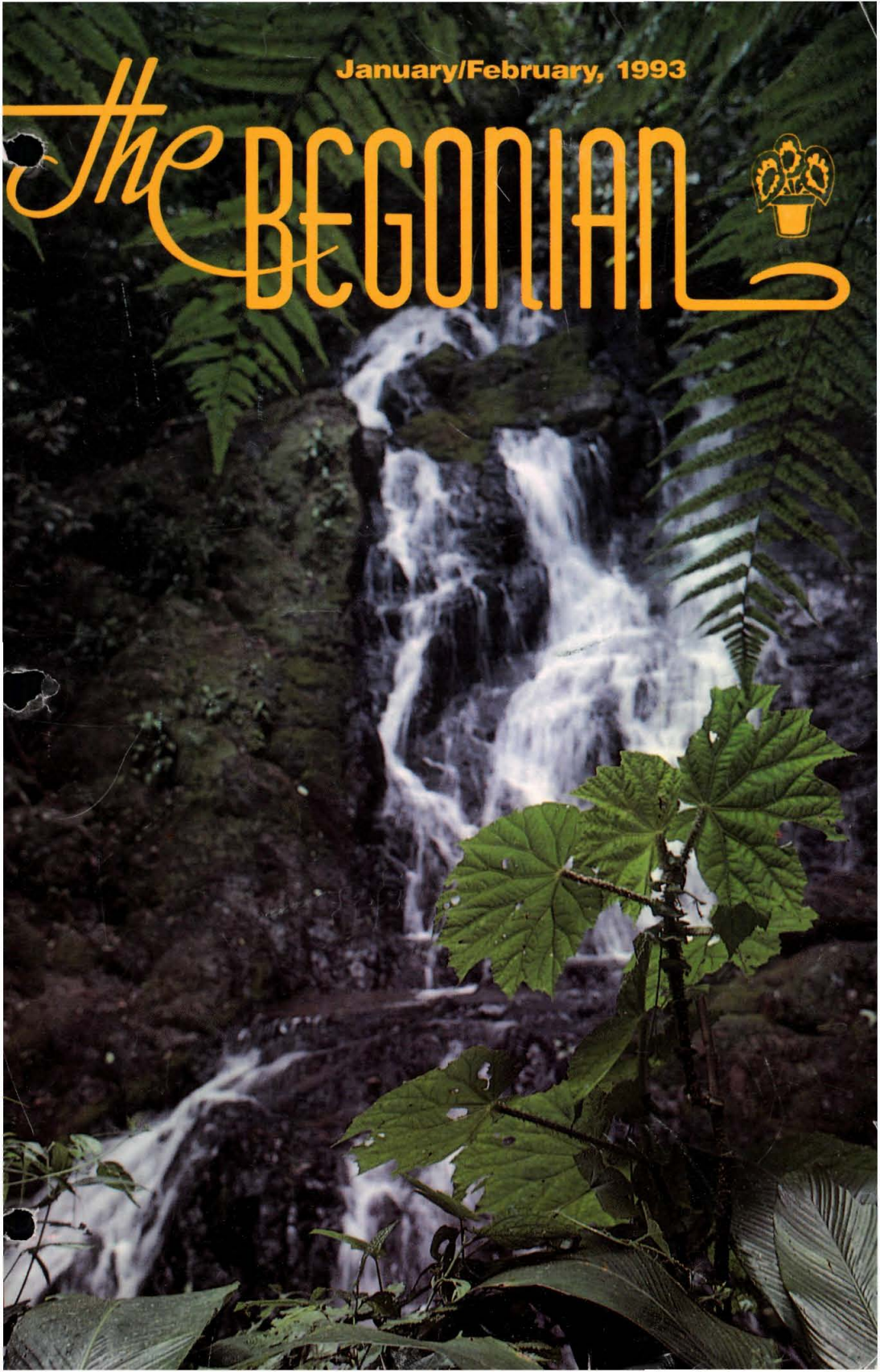


January/February, 1993

The BEGONIAN



The BEGONIAN

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Publication of the American Begonia Society

American Begonia Society

Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

Aims and Purposes

To stimulate and promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants.

To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants.

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

To gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture of begonias and companion plants.

To issue a bulletin which will be mailed to all members of the society.

To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

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COVER PHOTOS: Jacques Jangoux photographs begonias in their native habitat, and tells us how he does it (see page 4). The begonia featured on both front and back has a tentative identification of *B. capanamae*.

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Dear Friends,

There are several reasons why this issue is late. One is that the editor has been moving (that is personally exciting). Another is that technical advances and the cooperation of Horticultural Printers have made it possible to - well, turn the page and see for yourselves. We hope it will be exciting for all of you.

Special thanks for this issue go to the Members at Large, who several years ago started a fund to pay for more color in the **Begonian**.



Begonia Photography How to Photograph Begonias in the Wild

Text and Photographs
by Jacques Jangoux

Portrait of an unidentified begonia

The ads in the travel section of your Sunday paper feature inexpensive flights to exotic places. You've decided to take a trip to the tropics and see begonias in the wild. Here are some suggestions on photographing them in their natural environment - which is, most often, tropical or subtropical rainforest - and what equipment to take along.

Photographing in the rain forest is a challenge. First there is the sheer confusion of too many things (leaves, trees, branches, twigs) cluttering your viewfinder frame. It is difficult to isolate your subject against a non-distracting background.

The light doesn't help much: if it's sunny there are light flecks that create too much contrast for film, if it's cloudy all the greens turn the same dull color. Best is a faintly overcast sky.

You will be working in a hot, sweaty, physically challenging environment. It is uncomfortable and inconvenient to walk carrying a heavy camera bag hanging from your shoulder, especially on irregular and sometimes difficult terrain where you must balance on slippery rocks or tree roots, grab small trees or vines (that sometimes turn out, after you have grabbed them, to be thorny!), bend under low branches or fallen trees, etc.

This is more or less how I work under these conditions - or, more exactly, how I did it the last time, because each time I modify the equipment I take along, learning from the experiences of the previous trip.

Begonia fischeri in its native environment, taken with 35 mm f/2.0 lens



Begonia radicans, inaccessible except to a 300 mm lens



My pack has two long side pockets. In these are canned drinks (if drinkable water is not expected to be available), or a water canteen; a rehydration salt formula to replace salt lost

in perspiration (I use a commercial formula sold in pharmacies in Brazil to rehydrate children with diarrhea - but consult your physician on this, especially if you have high blood pressure); insect repellent (useful also for leeches). Anything you will need quick and easy access to can go in these side pockets. Inside the pack goes a compartmentalized camera bag. On its side goes my tripod. On top of the camera bag will go anything that does not fit in the side or the front pockets: additional clothes (sweaters, dry T-shirts), lunch, etc. My camera bag has a zippered inside pocket where I keep my passport, airline ticket, money and traveller's cheques.

It is much better to have your equipment in a backpack, which has the additional advantage of enabling you to carry other items such as a raincoat, your lunch, etc. Whether you use a daypack or a large pack will be a personal choice, depending on the amount of equipment you will carry. I use a large internal frame pack; it has a lower profile and doesn't get entangled in vines and low branches. My pack is a front-loading model, opening by a zippered rear flap that gives easy access to the equipment in my camera bag inside (without having to remove the camera bag itself). A large pocket on the flap gives quick access to a rain poncho and a hat.

Instead of a backpack plus a camera bag, you could use special backpacks designed for photographic equipment, such as those manufactured by Lowe Alpine Systems, Tenba, etc. I have not used them. If they provide room for extra clothing, lunch, etc., they should be great.

You will probably want to reserve a special place for small plastic bags, useful for collecting seed pods if collecting is allowed in the region or country you are visiting. Collecting seeds is prohibited in national parks, and countries have regulations on the export of germplasm; check the regulations first. You should also use common sense, and abide by international collecting standards by taking only a few of the seeds or cuttings available in an area.

Now for the photographic equipment itself. Mine is over 15 years old, so I don't have autofocus, autoexposure, zoom lenses, etc. I don't know how the high humidity of rainforests would affect the electronics of modern cameras. I usually carry two camera bodies in the field, so as to have a spare in case one breaks down, or to use films of different speeds. During most of my travels I carry a third backup body, which stays in my hotel room or wherever I am based. Often, to cut weight, I carry only one body in the field.

You will want a fast lens for those days when you don't feel like carrying the extra weight of a tripod, or when you don't have time to use one (as when other people in your group are walking ahead without waiting for you), or again when the ground topography doesn't permit its use, such as a steep slope. The lens could be either a 35mm f/2.0, or a 50 mm f/1.4. I suggest that you choose one between these two lenses: you always have to compromise between carrying minimal weight and having all the combinations focal length/maximum opening (= maximum speed) you might need.

The one lens that I feel most comfortable with, and the lens that is normally on my camera while I am in the forest, is the 35mm f/2.0, a moderate wide-angle lens that can cover many situations, and that I find well adapted for scenics inside the forest. A wide angle lens is ideal for showing the relationship between two elements in a photograph, such as a begonia and its environment. It is also short enough to let you go under the leaves of a medium-sized begonia, allowing you to show the leaves through translucent light, to emphasize leaf venation, or to show hanging flowers hidden under the foliage (for example, see the picture of *B. collaris* on the back cover of the Jan-Feb. 1989 **Begonian**). F/2.0 is fast enough so in many cases

you will be able to handhold your camera, even in the dim light of the forest undergrowth. A 24mm lens (or wider, like 17mm - but it is difficult to use) will let you include more of the environment in the picture.

As opposed to wide-angle lenses, telephoto lenses (generally lenses 100mm or longer) are useful to isolate a single element from a distracting background, throwing the background out of focus and letting you emphasize details. For this reason lenses in the 100mm range are considered the ideal portrait lenses; this holds true for portraits of begonias, including details of flowers or insects (for which you may want, instead, a macro lens). Long lenses are also useful, of course, for plants that you cannot get close to, such as those growing on a cliff or across a stream, or climbers and epiphytes (see *B. radicans*, page 5, or the begonia with deeply parted leaves on cliff across stream, p. 8).

If I had to go light and my main objective were to photograph begonias or other similarly sized plants, I would take along my 35mm f/2 and the 100 mm f/2.8. But then, there are days when I feel more like using another combination. I might use the 50mm f/3.5 macro, OR the 100mm f/4 macro. I may expect to see a lot of epiphytes, and decide to take along the 300 mm. telephoto.

A good rule: don't overload yourself with equipment. You may be able to return later with different equipment; photos of *B. burbridgei* at shelter 4 at Kinabulu (featured on the cover of the May-June 1990 issue and on page 171, September-October 1990) were taken with 100 mm and 35 mm the first day, and with 35 and 50 the second day.

If you use only fast lenses (f/2, f/1.4) you may not need a tripod, but depth of field will be very shallow at these openings. If you want the close-up capabilities of a macro lens, or if you want a lot of depth of field in order to show plants in their environment, you will probably need a tripod.

There is no doubt that your pictures will be better if you use a tripod. But you will have to carry it, and it will take longer to take each picture. Terrain may help you decide. There is less need of a tripod in montane forest than in lowland forest: in lowland forests the tree crowns are side by side, forming a continuous layer (or often, two or three layers) interrupting the light. In montane forests, the crowns are disposed like the steps of a stair, leaving lateral openings through which some light reaches the ground. The first day, when your legs and body are not yet in shape, don't take along your tripod! It's extra weight, and you'll feel it.

What about film? ASA (ISO) 50, 64, or 100 cover most situations if you are willing to use a tripod. Some films give a better rendition of the various shades of green you will encounter in the forest. I suggest that before leaving home you go to your local botanical garden or tropical greenhouse (your own greenhouse will do) to test various types of film with tropical green foliage. Look at your pictures side by side on a lightbox, and you will be amazed at the difference!

I rarely use a flash. Actually, I almost never carry one with me. Flash lighting usually destroys the natural look of the environment by making the background go dark or entirely black; leaves will often show unwanted reflections, looking too shiny. I must confess that I haven't mastered the technique of multiple flash and of the use of reflectors and polarized light that give a more natural appearance to flash pictures. In the rainforest, carrying more equipment is problematic.

Figuring out the exposure in the forest is not self-evident. Don't trust your exposure meter blindly. There is a wide difference in light between the ground level and the canopy; including both in the same photograph is tricky or often impossible. Forest leaves are usually dark green; on dark foliage your light meter will tend to overexpose. You may have to close down

your lens by 1/2 or 1 f-stop. Likewise, your light meter may underexpose very light green or whitish or silvery leaves, including the variegated begonias. In case of doubt, and for all important pictures, bracket on both sides of your light meter reading at 1/2 f-stop intervals. In other words, for dark subjects make 3 exposures: one at your meter reading, the other two closing down your lens respectively by 1/2 and 1 f-stop. For light subjects, take 3 pictures: at your meter reading, and opening up 1/2 f-stop and 1 f-stop.

Now some general considerations. Keep your film as cool as possible. Don't leave it, or your camera, in the sun. When not taking pictures, leave your film in a air-conditioned room, or better, in a refrigerator or freezer (to avoid condensation, you will have to allow some time for it to reach outside temperature before opening the film can). I keep exposed film in a refrigerator, not in a freezer (because of the humidity it has gathered). *Don't load your camera until you're ready to use it*, so that your film won't pick up humidity.

For travelling when not taking pictures, I usually keep most of my equipment in a Halliburton foam-padded aluminum case. In humid conditions I place in the case a cotton bag containing grade silica gel (the one that's blue when dry and that turns pink when it ab-



Unidentified *Begonia* species on cliff across stream, taken with 300 mm lens

sorbs humidity). I dry it in a frying pan in hotel kitchens.

Should you worry about airport x-rays? I am not sure. Airport security officers say exposure to x-rays is safe for film. I've had film x-rayed, and the pictures were all right. I carry all my film, exposed and unexposed, in a transparent plastic bag, and request that it be inspected manually, along with my camera. In some countries, including most European ones, they won't do this.

Do you need special clothing? There is nothing really different about jungle clothing; what you use at home on a summer day is usually fine. It has to be light. Long pants protect you against scratches (and snakes) in dense undergrowth; if there are insects, long sleeves are recom-

mended - otherwise, short sleeves are *more comfortable*. I prefer cotton, because it absorbs perspiration. I used to wear running shoes, but I had an ankle problem a few years ago (not related to jungle walking) so now I use lightweight hiking boots, which give more ankle support. The jungle floor is often very irregular. I use a rain poncho rather than a raincoat, because it covers the backpack; it also provides ventilation on the sides.

Now for your next begonia vacation, you will have to devise your own combination of pack, cameras, lenses, film, etc. - the one that best suits your way of taking pictures, the one that will let you, at the same time, enjoy nature and take good photographs.

Finally, before you go: the most important part of your photographic equipment is yourself. Get in shape! The jungle is not easy. Being in good shape you will enjoy your trip much more. Do some mountain hiking at home, or at least don't be lazy on your jogging or your walking. Well...I don't do it, or only rarely, and the first two or three days in the forest are, most often, miserable!

The difficult task comes on returning home: trying to identify the species photographed...

Photographer and botanist Jacques Jangoux lives at Rua dos Timbiras 1375, Apto. 1001, 66033-800 Belém, Pará, Brazil.



Photos by
Laura Campbell



CHALLENGE MET!

by Frank Green

Dispossession? After more than 20 years in one spot?

Disbelief, shock, apprehension were all amongst the emotions our branch experienced when we were told that Northeastern University was closing its greenhouses. Buxton Branch had been involved for two decades with the Barkley Begonia Collection at Northeastern - and now we were to be homeless!

The Barkley Collection was initiated by Dr. Fred Barkley, Professor of Botany at Northeastern, early in his tenure. Dr. Barkley was a member, officer, and president of Buxton during his years in Massachusetts.

He left a significant begonia collection at Northeastern upon his retirement, with a greenhouse committee of Buxton members committed to assist in maintenance of that collection. For many years Buxton has faithfully fulfilled that commitment.

The Barkley Collection is the only significant non-commercial collection in New England. The non-commercial factor is important, because species without much sales appeal are preserved as well as the showier specimens. A commercial greenhouse must grow that which will sell readily. And even the botanic gardens tend to view "display-worthiness" as a criterion in deciding whether to keep a particular variety.

The Barkley Collection has been the primary source of plants for Buxton's annual exhibit at the New England Spring Flower Show - an exhibit that has earned us several educational awards, as well as numerous gold, silver, and bronze medals over the years. This exhibit has been the initial introduction to begonias for countless members.

The Barkley Collection has also been an important source of plants and cuttings for ABS conventions, for some of the botanic gardens, for various branches, and for many individuals as well. Was this legacy from Dr. Barkley to disappear - sacrificed on the altar of budget cuts?

Buxton members decided, as soon as the imminent closing of Northeastern's greenhouses was announced, that they would do the necessary to preserve the Barkley Collection. We voted at our February 1991 meeting - days after we heard the news - to raise funds to preserve the collection.

Three immediate steps were voted unanimously at that meeting: to find an alternative site, to impose a voluntary assessment of \$15 on dues for each of the next two years, and to ask for pledges from our members to establish the Barkley Preservation Fund. We walked out of that meeting with over \$1200 pledged from the few members present. A splendid beginning!

Time was a complication. The collection was moved twice - on December 23, 1991, we moved into temporary quarters provided by Roger Migliorini, a Buxton member who lives 40 miles south of Boston. There we paid only for heating costs, which,

until the collection was moved again on Easter weekend, 1992, amounted to about \$1400.

On Easter weekend John Harrington and I moved the collection into the present facility in Sudbury. The glass greenhouse is 35' x 118'. We have room here to expand the collection - in fact, have added about 200 varieties, with plants donated by Joy Porter, Normand Dufresne, and the U.S. Botanical Gardens (courtesy of the kind efforts of Bill Voss).

Our greenhouse had been used for growing carnations, and the old benches were filled with soil. The soil has been left in place, and keeping the benches soaked has minimized the watering needs substantially, an important factor in maintaining a large collection with a totally volunteer staff.

There was no heating equipment. We have installed used hot air furnaces. We have also tightened up the greenhouse to minimize heat losses, but in an old house these still occur. Heating is our major expense, and a long cold fall hasn't helped. The heating season here is October through April.

What remains of Dr. Barkley's original collection? There is no way of even guessing what plants were in the collection at the time of his retirement; as far

as we know, there was no inventory, and no one presently working with the collection knew it then. I feel the important thing is that the collection has been built on Dr. Barkley's original collection. The collection presently consists of about 700 begonia varieties, somewhat heavier on hybrids.

The financial needs imposed by a move into a rented greenhouse are more than our branch can handle alone during this first year. We have had a fair response by individual ABS members, and some of the branches. At the 1992 ABS Convention in Anaheim, a spontaneous collection resulted in \$324 donated to the Barkley Preservation Fund.

We expect the greenhouse to be self-supporting after the summer of 1993, through increased plant sales (begonias and other plants). Getting through this first winter is our major hurdle. We sincerely appreciate the support of our own members and others.

We earnestly request that all ABS members - and branches - who can afford to make some contribution to help preserve and enhance the legacy of Dr. Barkley send a check to the **Barkley Preservation Fund**, c/o Frank M. Green, 20 Cross Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420. All contributions are tax deductible. Please

don't feel that a dollar or two is not important: if every ABS member sent \$2, our heating costs for the winter would be met with a fair amount left over for greenhouse supplies.

We would certainly appreciate the participation of every begonia lover who can spare a dollar or two to keep Dr. Fred Barkley's legacy a living monument to him and a resource to ABS members in the future.

Thanks to the many who have joined with us in this most important undertaking:

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 Gail Titcomb
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 Margaret & Rudi
 Ziesenhenn

ABS Branches
 Greater Atlanta Branch
 East Bay
 Edna Stewart
 Greater Chicago
 Miami
 Pinellas County
 San Francisco

Coming Events

February 20-21: New South Wales Begonia Society 5th Grand Exhibition and Sale, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., in the Harvey-Lowe Pavilion, Castle Hill showground, Castle Hill (near Sydney), NSW, Australia. Refreshments available. Admission \$1.

March 13-21: Knickerbocker Branch will have a booth at the New York Flower Show at Pier 92, 51st St. & the Hudson River.

April 16-18: Southwest Region Get-Together, "Begonia Spring Fling" at Green Oaks Inn, Fort Worth, Texas. Mae Blanton Branch is sponsoring.

May 6-9, 1993
American Begonia Society
Convention
"Begonias -
The Greatest Show on
Earth"
Miami, Florida
Watch for your packet!

New Conservatory, Centre for Ballarat



Ballarat Gardens in the City of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia, is to have a new \$2 million Conservatory and Horticultural Centre honoring pioneer newspaper proprietor Robert Clark. The Robert Clark Horticultural Centre will be a gift to the City of Ballarat from Mr. Clark's grandson, Mr. Robert Bruce Clark. The son of a Scottish bookbinder, Robert Clark came to Australia in 1855 at the age of 29. After newspaper experience in Ballarat, Melbourne, and Talbot, he returned to Ballarat in 1865 and two years later established The Ballarat Courier in partnership with Edward Bateman. He was sole proprietor from 1889 until his death in 1902, a highly regarded citizen who supported the City and its community both through his paper and by his own civic activities. The gift to Ballarat is envisaged as a place of enjoyment and enlightenment for visitors and citizens.

In addition to the 600 square metre fully glazed Conservatory, the new facilities will include an attractive reception area, exhibition space, garden shop and coffee shop, office and meeting room, and a court-

yard area where visitors can be shown garden skills.

Visitors who now view the Begonias and other floral displays through glass will be able to stroll through the Conservatory, in which it is proposed to stage seven major shows each year, including the ever popular Tuberous Begonias in February and March. Our ever increasing collection of Begonias "other than tuberous" will be featured in January as well as being incorporated into the tuberous display. Design themes for the shows will vary each year and emphasize the celebration of major community and cultural events.

The Friends of the Botanic Gardens together with the Begonia Festival Association and all of Ballarat's garden clubs and societies are expected to play a key role in the operation of the Centre.

Ed. note: The City of Ballarat spells its name with a total of four "a"s, the Gardens (and the postal office) with a total of 3.



The Wonders of Nature

Text & Photos by Averil Thompson

My Begonia 'Silver Jewell' hangs outside my bathroom window in a little alcove on the southern side of my house. It just seems to love that position, and as I write this we are coming into our spring time.



My husband, Vince, noticed that each time he watered in the vicinity of B. 'Silver Jewell', a dove would fly out. Becoming more curious, Vince peered closer to the begonias growing in this area and to his amazement, there, huddled together, were two baby doves - right in the middle of B. 'Silver Jewell'! They were only just hatched, as they had no feathers, and the nest of a very scant number of twigs. But that is peculiar to doves.

And so we watched, much to the excitement and wonderment of Alexandra, our granddaughter, as these baby doves grew strong enough to fly from their nest and leave B. 'Silver Jewell' with lots of "droppings". So we're waiting with baited breath for a prize-winning plant to grow on!

We live in a northern suburb of Brisbane in the state of Queensland, and because we are fortunate enough to face onto the Virginia Golf Course we enjoy lots of birds and frilled lizards in our garden. I have planted Australian natives and my begonias hang under these trees as well as grow in the ground under them. Cane-like begonias grow well in the ground, too, especially on the southern side, while the bush house is for the special or more delicate begonias. Summer temperatures reach 32°C. and winter as low as 2°C., but not often. Humidity is very high in the summer.

Averil Thompson is editor of the outstanding Queensland Begonia Society Newsletter. Her address is 18 Kelly Rd., Virginia 4014, Queensland, Australia.

61st American Begonia Society Convention

Hosted by the Miami Branch

May 6-9, 1993



BEGONIAN INDEX 1992

1992 TOPICS AT A GLANCE

Jan.-Feb.: George McCormick, Australian Convention 1992, Begonia species variable, Begonia Fiesta, 1991 Convention seminars

March-April: B. 'Flat Rock', Corwin's garden, adventitious growth, SWR Get-Together 1992, office magic, pollen & seeds, pesticide facts, pesticide safety, *B. subnummularifolia*, tribute to begonias, species listing project

May-June: Orange County, hybridizing tuberhybrida, begonias of Malaysia, begonia discovery in Hawaii, U# listing 201-217, *B. listada*, cats & begonias

July-Aug.: begonias in Brazil's Serra do Mar, begonias for birds, begonias in Mexico, B. 'Glennis Crouch', birth of begoniac, finding begoniacs, spring in Guadalajara, new Lowe cultivars, SWR Get-Together 1992, begonias & raccoons, pest management

Sept.-Oct.: begonias in Serra do Mar, begonias in Malaysia, adventitious growth, SWR Get-Together 1992, Pinellas County Branch, Mt. Coot-Tha Show, "darn begonia bug", *B. ficicola*

Nov.-Dec.: Convention 1992: friendly contact, show results, officers installed, Karegeannes honored, seminars; Convention 1993 & Hurricane Andrew, begonias in Serra do Mar, begonias in Malaysia, Handreck seminars, begonias as bonsai, begonia memories, odd growth

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*photograph or illustration

BULLETIN BOARD



ABS News

Appointments:

Begonian Back Issues - **Claire Frontera**, 3131 Patriot Lane, Sacramento, CA 95827.

Due to failing health Betty Tillotson regrets that she can no longer handle the back issues of the **Begonian**. I am delighted to be the one to take over this activity. For only \$2 per issue plus \$1 postage, these contain a wealth of information that can be found nowhere else.

If anyone has requested back issues and not received them, please contact me.

Claire Frontera, 3131 Patriot Lane, Sacramento, CA 95827.

CONVENTION SITES SELECTED

The 1994 ABS Convention will be held in the spring, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, with Southwest Region as host.

In 1995 the Convention site will be Boston, Massachusetts, with Buxton Branch as host.

Awards Nominations Open

It is time to nominate members for the American Begonia Society's top awards. The three awards are presented for outstanding service to the Society on a national level. Please give careful, thoughtful consideration when submitting nominations, and include the reasons for your nominations in your letter.

Deadline for nominations is March 26. Please send nominations to Awards Chairman Thelma O'Reilly, 10942 Sunray Place, La Mesa, CA 91941.

The **Eva Kenworthy Gray Award** is given for contributing original material that helps further understanding of begonias, and/or for increasing harmony among members.

The **Herbert P. Dyckman Award for Service** is presented to a member who has rendered long-term or very outstanding service above and beyond the normal duties of an officer.

The **Alfred D. Robinson Medal of Honor** is given not to a person, but to a begonia cultivar. To be eligible, a begonia should be registered with the Nomenclature Department, easy to grow, and widely distributed for at least five and no more than fifteen years.

(Please see the **Begonian**, May-June 1992, pages 103-104 for a listing of previous recipients.)

IN MEMORY

On Saturday, November 7, 1992, our friend **Flo'Belle Moseley** returned to the garden of her creator.

Flo'Belle was a very special lady. I first met Flo Belle while I was working at North Haven Gardens. She would bring rare botanical treasures, usually begonias, to Ralph Pinkus, owner of North Haven. He would then propagate them. When a rare plant was not doing well, we would take it to Flo'Belle's house to see what was wrong, or leave it with her to nurse back to health.

Flo'Belle helped organize the Dallas Area Branch and Southwest Region. And even when she couldn't work with the members or attend the meetings (because of her health) she was always sharing cuttings of her rare begonias and supporting the begonia organizations financially.

Flo'Belle first introduced me to the wonderful world of begonias about 18 years ago. She has been my mentor. Her generosity, wonderful sense of humor, and spirit of teaching will be very much missed.

It is comforting to know that the heavenly gardens will be filled with begonias when we all get there. Flo'Belle will make sure of that. - Don Miller, in the Southwest Region Begonia Leaflet.

Long-time Santa Clara Valley member **Art Sackenruther** died at home on November 20, 1992 at age 90. A retired Navy officer, he was owner of Art's Greenhouse and a member of numerous plant societies. Art had friends across the country through his participation in the Round Robins, and was a stalwart worker on the plant sale committee at National Conventions. His knowledge of begonias was even larger than his sizable begonia collection, and his wisdom, enthusiasm, and charm will be missed.

James Hankerson died on December 27, 1992. He was a founding member of the Dallas Area Branch, serving as an officer almost every year, and of Southwest Region. Gifted with mechanical skills, he volunteered his talents for woodworking, making card holders and display boxes still in use for regional shows. Lawyer, author, raconteur, his professional accomplishments were many: he wrote legislation in Texas that enabled mentally handicapped children to attend public schools, and was a teacher and counselor in the Dallas Community College system. We shall miss his gentle humor, his quiet good nature, his keen intelligence.

In the News...

FOCAS (Foster Child Advocate Services) is a Dallas, Texas organization of volunteers appointed by the courts to watch over children in foster care and report on their wellbeing, part of a national network called Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). Dallas Life Magazine reported on FOCAS activities in their November 29, 1992 issue. Among the volunteers is Dallas Area Branch member **Tish Verde**, who for the past seven years has spent 40 unpaid hours a week on behalf of children. She is currently involved in opening a new office for FOCAS in Rockwall County - still full-time, still a volunteer.

And she still finds time for begonias!



**Southwest Region
Get-Together
April 16-18, 1993
Fort Worth, Texas**

Mildew

by Kevin Handreck

Some begonias are attacked by mildew; others are not. Some growers have more problems than others. Mildew problems are worse in some years than others. Have you ever wondered why there should be these variations?

First, let us look at the "disease triangle" - a pillar of all studies of diseases. The "triangle" states that for any living thing to have a disease there must be a disease-causing organism (a pathogen), a suitable living thing to attack (a host), and the right conditions for attack to take place and be successful.

Pathogens

Mildews are caused by the spores of a number of different fungi. There is usually no shortage of these spores in urban environments, as they are easily blown from property to property. Some of them are probably sitting on the page you are now reading. Almost certainly others will be on the leaves of your begonias, and on surfaces in their general surroundings.

With spores everywhere, does it make any sense to remove diseased leaves and to keep your begonia houses as clean as possible? The answer is a big YES. The reason is that while a plant may resist attack by a few spores, a large number arriving at one time can overwhelm its defenses. Keeping the spore population as low as possible is a key part in minimizing mildew attack.

A susceptible host

Begonias such as *B. sutherlandii*, *B. dregei*, and *B. 'Looking Glass'* are renowned for getting mildew in massive doses. These are susceptible hosts for the mildew-causing fungi.

Other begonias, such as *B. hydrocotylifolia*, *B. egregia*, *B. 'Fairyland'*, and *B. 'Sisquoc'* seem generally to be immune to attack by mildew, even though they may be sitting right beside a plant that emits clouds of spores as soon as it is

touched. They have some way of resisting attack, perhaps through having thick skins, a dense covering of hairs on their leaves, or chemicals in their leaves that inhibit the spores or kill the fungal strands that grow from them.

If we are sick of removing leaves killed by mildew and sick of looking at the mess mildew can make, we can:

- grow only those plants that are resistant to attack;
- spray repeatedly to kill spores in the air; or
- consider the third side of the disease triangle, and provide conditions that prevent the fungal spores from germinating and growing.

Environment

Prevention is easy to write about, but I have found it hard to put into practice. Some idea of what we have to achieve can be had from considering the conditions needed for mildew spores to germinate.

- Water is essential. That means water on the surface of the leaves. That water doesn't have to be present in drops. The thinnest of films is enough for fungal spores. The amount of moisture that is left on a mirror if you breathe lightly on it is enough to allow germination of powdery mildew spores.
- The water must be present for from 1 to 10 hours. Powdery mildew spores germinate on leaves that are damp for about 1 hour. Downy mildew spores need several hours of dampness.
- The temperature must be just right. Some spores germinate only when there has been a sudden drop in temperature. Such a temperature drop usually allows water vapour in the air to condense on leaf surfaces, so producing the conditions needed

for spore germination. The first cool to cold weather in autumn is the time when most of us in Southern Australia see the first mildew. In warmer areas of high humidity, just a slight fall in temperature can put enough water on leaves to trigger germination of spores.

- ❑ The higher the humidity of the air around the leaves, the easier it is for water to condense on the leaves if the temperature falls, as it does towards nightfall or if we allow a blast of cold air into a warm greenhouse. Of course many of our begonias thrive in humid air - so long as the temperature is even and warm.
- ❑ A sudden fall in temperature will increase the relative humidity of the air and make it easier for condensation to occur.

Managing the environment

The foregoing suggests the following strategies for reducing mildew attack:

- ❑ Water only at times when any water on leaves will evaporate rapidly. That is easier said than done if the air is very humid and cool, but watering about mid-morning gives the mildew the least chance of growing. Never water late in the day.
- ❑ Keep the air moving about the plants. Air movement reduces the possibility of water condensing on the leaves. In other words, follow the rule handed down to us by generations of begonia growers - have good ventilation, even at the expense of losing a bit of heat.
- ❑ Air movement is aided by providing some space between plants.


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And for the technically minded with plenty of money -

- ❑ On clear nights, draw night curtains over the plants to reduce loss of heat from the leaves by radiation.
- ❑ If possible, slightly heat the air on nights when condensation would otherwise occur.

*Soils researcher Kevin Handreck is Chair of the Association of Australian Begonia Societies, and this article was written for the November, 1992 issue of **Begonia Australis**. Kevin's address is 2 Birdwood St., Netherby 5062, Australia.*

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Round Robin Notes

Virginia Hamann, Round Robin Director

#1, General Culture:

This Robin takes us from spring through summer and fall. Weather has been the big topic; most members agree that it has been very odd! Wet in areas that are normally dry, and of course dry in normally wet areas. This has been a challenge to begonia growers, as the conditions are all different when growing outdoors. Carolyn Collman (CA) is welcomed to the flight; rhizomatous begonias are her favorites to grow.

#6, Rare and Unusual:

Lillian Charles (KY) sent pictures of her *B. paulensis* - a gorgeous plant with an 8 to 10 inch leaf.

#16, Eastern General:

Members have been busy planting seeds. Mildred Swyka (DE) has cane seedlings up and showing tiny white spots. Carl Walker, Jr. (NC) has seedlings of U031 and U188 that he is transplanting. B. U188 from Peru has very large sticky green leaves.

#5, Species:

John Howell (TX) tells that his compost pile is now producing plants! Seems that he tossed out diseased plants, only to have them survive. He is now potting them up and giving them a second chance.

#12, Tropicals:

This Robin has just restarted. Chairman Alton Lee (FL) suggested changing the name to "Begonias and Allied Companion Plants." This would include ficus, orchids, ferns, gesneriads, bromeliads, etc. Elaine Ayers (OH) thinks the cool summer helped her bromeliads to spike up. Cool growing orchids and hoyas are also blooming better. Helen Clements (IL) reports her orchids bloom better in her Illinois home than they did when she lived in Indiana.

#30, Rex:

Although rex begonias like cooler temperatures and special care, Cynthia Bishop (CA) tells of rex seedlings growing in a pot of geraniums outdoors where the temperatures reached 110 degrees! Perhaps her breeding program to produce heat-tolerant plants is successful.

When growing rex begonias, and others as well, we tend to watch the *air* temperature, keeping it just right for them. John Howell (TX) reminds members that *roof* or *soil* temperatures are also important, and may be different from the air temperature. He doesn't let rexes go above 85 degrees.

#13, Canes:

This is a full Robin again, with two new members. Margaret Coats (TX) cleaned out her greenhouse for summer, planting her begonias in beds outdoors. Automatic sprinklers simplify her summer watering program.

Thelma Crawford (KS) has canes in full bloom. B. 'Marie Rose' is full of deep red blossoms.

John Keller (NJ) found seedlings of begonias and streptocarpus flourishing when he returned home after a summer away.

Each member wrote about the ABS convention, and how they enjoyed it.

#5, Hybridizing:

The Hybridizing Robin welcomed new members Elmer Wagner (LA), Walter Dworkin (NY), and Bill Voss (VA). Pollination was discussed, covering questions about why male blossoms don't open and how to dry the female blossom. Immature blossoms, high soil temperatures, low humidity, diseases, and soil that is either too wet or too dry can be the cause of these problems.

Naomi Lynch (TX) tests seed for the Seed Fund using this method: she uses sterilized soil (her favorite is Sunshine #3)

in her seed trays. By planting 10 seeds of each variety, she can figure the percentage of germination easily. Working with hundreds of trays she uses a tape recorder to make notes of her germination progress.

Brad Thompson (CA) asks why it happens that canes bloom after cuttings are made — the cuttings are blooming in jars of water. Brad also suggests that if you have a problem discarding plants, ask a trusted friend to help you sort and throw away.

Walter Dworkin (NY) enjoys working with cane begonias; he grows over 600 seedlings a year, and wishes he could find a way to tell if the female bloom is sterile. He finds joy in creating new and exciting hybrids.

#15, Cold Climate Greenhouses:

In the Netherlands, Beatrice Huckriede van der Lann has enjoyed an extremely nice summer. Her annual and perennial plants bloomed beautifully. Plants in pots had enough rain to keep them watered and healthy. Beatrice uses Camocote in March to keep the soil from building up fertilizer salts.

Elaine Ayers (OH) uses physen, a fungicide, once a week as she foliar feeds, to keep mildew from attacking her plants. Mary McClelland (NE) sent pictures of her begonias and orchids growing on her terrace.

#25, Midwest Growers:

In the Midwest folks have been busy getting plants indoors as wintery weather is just around the corner. Marvin Kahr (IA) keeps geraniums over the winter by pulling the plants and storing them in a box of sand until spring, when he waters them. Once revived, the plants are potted and put outdoors for summer growing.

Until next time, keep'em flying!

Round Robins are a packet of letters between members interested in specific aspects of growing begonias. Minimum number of members is 4, with eight the maximum. Flights that have openings are:
1 opening each: #4, Windowsills & #23, Canes (combined); #6, Odd/Rare/Unusual; #8, Tuberous; #9, Growing under Lights; #11, Canes; #46, Greenhouse Growing; #54, Research.

2 openings: #16, Eastern General; #20, Photography; #25, Midwest Growers II: #33, Hybridizing.

3 openings: #12, Tropicals or Companion Plants; #15, Cold Climate Greenhouses.

4 openings: #14, Semperflorens

5 openings: #61, Thickstemmed.

Contact Virginia Hamann, Rt. 1, Box 10, Chester, IA 52134 to join any of these Robins, or to start a new one.

The Indoor Gardening Society of America, Inc. Dept. B

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B. U174
B. U205

ABS Bookstore

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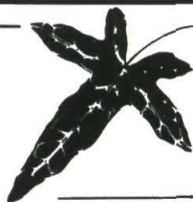
Epidermal Outgrowth in Begonia. Harriet B. Creighton. 1972. 16 pages. \$1.

Guidelines for National Conventions and Annual Shows. Thelma O'Reilly. Approved by Board of Directors July 1982. \$3.

*Send stamped, self-addressed legal size envelope
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Prices include postage. Texas residents please add 7 3/4% sales tax.
Send check or money order in US funds to:

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THE AMERICAN IVY SOCIETY

is the International Registration Authority for *Hedera*; provides sources for new & unusual ivies; publishes *Ivy Journal* three times a year with reports on research, hardiness testing, life-sized photos of ivies. Memberships: General \$15; Institutional \$25; Commercial \$50. Information: The American Ivy Society, P.O. Box 520, West Carrollton, OH 45449-0520.

BEGONIAN MINI-ADS

Mini-ads are a service to our members. The charge is \$1 per line per insertion with a minimum of \$4. Payment must accompany order. Make checks payable to ABS and mail to:

Cynthia Bishop
4150 Auburn-Folsom Rd.
Loomis, CA 95650
(916) 652-7311

BEGONIA CUTTINGS AND PLANTS. Send \$2 for expanded 1993 list. Kay's Greenhouses, 207 W. Southcross, San Antonio, TX 78221.

SOUTHWEST REGION, ABS: Annual Get-Together, show, sale; newsletter. Membership \$7, family \$10. Send to Marie Harrell, Rt. 3, Box 689, Elgin, TX 78621.

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BEGONIA SLIDES SOUGHT for a book to be published in Europe. Please contact Mr. Milan Sulc, 1580 Oleyres/VD, Switzerland, Tel. (011-41-37)75-23-74.

HOUSEPLANT MAGAZINE - Enjoy indoor gardening, travel, humor, hydroponics, tips for better growing, and information about your favorite houseplants - all in one delightful, full-color magazine. 1993 Discount subscription rate to ABS members. One year for four issues \$15.95 US/\$19.95 Canada & Mexico/\$24.95 overseas. Sample copy \$3.50 US/\$4.50 Canada & Mexico/\$5.50 overseas. US Funds drawn on US Bank only. For VISA/MC orders call 1(800)892-7594; or mail to **HOUSEPLANT MAGAZINE**, PO Box 1638-BS, Elkins, West Virginia 26241-1638.

BEGONIAS: THE COMPLETE REFERENCE GUIDE by Mildred L. and Edward J. Thompson. 884 pages, 850 illustrations (165 in color). Culture, classification, and history. \$20.00 to ABS members. To order autographed copies write: THE THOMPSONS, P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968. **BEGONIAS: 1984 UPDATE** \$6.75. Prices include shipping. Foreign orders \$5 additional for shipping via Surface Mail.

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Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

August 21, 1992

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Begonia Society was held on August 21, 1992 at the Inn At The Park, Anaheim, California. There were 25 members present. President Carol Notaras called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Secretary Ingeborg Foo read the Minutes of the June 6, 1992 meeting. They were approved as read.

Eleanor Calkins gave the Treasurer's report for the fiscal year August 1, 1991 to July 31, 1992. Checking accounts, \$4,423.80; savings accounts, \$42,390.82; for a total of \$46, 814.62. The board voted to cash in the Certificate of Deposit at the next maturity date.

Correspondence: Russ Richardson suggested we advertise in House and Porch Garden. Vote was tabled until the next meeting. Martha Curry received a letter from the Gesneriad Society cancelling their exchange ad.

Branch Relations: There have been no queries about new branches. Houston Satellite Branch has over 30 members now.

Back Issues: Betty Tillotson reported income of \$107.80.

Bookstore: Anita Ruthenberg reported balance of \$333.83.

Ballot: Ronnie Nevins reported election of the nominated slate of officers.

Seed Fund: Diana H. Gould reported income of \$702.42 and expenses of \$306 for the period 10/91 to 2/92. A check for \$210.48 was sent for the period 2/92 to June 22, 1992.

Conservation: Bruce C. Boardman reported a contribution from the Edna Stewart Pittsburgh Branch. Members are urged to send their species list to Kingsley Langenberg.

Convention: 1992 Chairman Elda Regimbal thanked everyone for coming and for their help.

Historian: Norma Pfrunder asked again for branches to send copies of their newsletters.

Judging: Maxine Zinman reported there were two judging schools in 1992.

Membership: John Ingles, Jr. reported 80 life members, 142 institutions, and 1392 dues-paying members as of July 31, 1992.

Long-range Planning: Kay Tucker reported that Southwest Region is interested in hosting the 1994 Convention in Oklahoma City. The board voted in favor.

Nomenclature: Carrie Karegeannes reported registration of two new begonia cultivars, with 14 applications requested and mailed. Nomencla-

ture Committee member Jack Golding will serve as the begonia consultant for the American Horticulture Society A- Z Dictionary of Garden Plants.

New Business:

Eleanor Calkins agreed to monitor the ABS post office box in Encinitas, CA.

Doug Hahn urged each Board member to prepare a budget and send it to Business Manager Dale Elmlade.

A motion to change the Constitution to allow election of officers every two years instead of every year was defeated.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ingeborg Foo, Secretary

Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting

August 22, 1992

The Annual Business Meeting was held at the Inn At The Park in Anaheim, California on August 22, 1992. After the luncheon President Carol Notaras called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.. Margaret Lee read the Aims and Purposes of the Society. The officers were introduced.

Secretary Ingeborg Foo read the Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting from September 14, 1991. The Minutes were approved as read.

Eleanor Calkins gave the Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year August 1, 1991 to July 31, 1992: checking account, \$4,423.80; savings accounts, \$42,390.82; for a total of \$46,814.62.

Committee Reports:

Audit: Ralph Corwin and Ed Bates reported that auditing is in progress.

Awards: Thelma O'Reilly received records from Rudi Ziesenhenne. Joan Coulat filled the last position on the Awards Committee. Tom Keepin and Alethea Thomas have ended their three years of service.

Ballots: Ronnie Nevins counted the ballots and reported the election of the nominated officers for 1992/1993.

Bookstore: Anita Ruthenberg reported \$333.83 cash on hand.

Branch Relations: Doug Hahn suggested formation of sister branches, which could exchange cuttings, information, and ideas.

Seed Fund: Diana H. Gould reported receipts of \$702.42, expenses of \$395.71 for a net of \$306.71.

Convention: Elda Regimbal thanked one and all, those who helped and those who came to

make the Convention a success.

Historian: Norma Pfrunder asked for branch newsletters, pictures of activities, etc.

Judging: Maxine Zinman reported five new judges. Nine branches received cultural awards.

Membership: John Ingles, Jr. reported 80 Life Members, 142 Institutions, 1,392 dues-paying

Show Classification: President Notaras thanked Pat Maley Belkham for taking over at the last minute.

Slide Library: Charles Jaros reported that a new slide show will be out soon. He invited everyone to the Miami Convention May 6-9, 1993, the 'Greatest Show on Earth'.

Regional Report: The Southwest Region Get-Together will be held in Fort Worth, Texas April 16-18, 1993.

Begonian: A replacement is needed for editor Tamsin Boardman.

Wanda Macnair gave a brief report on the Barkley Collection. A hat was passed around for donations. Jack Golding gave a brief background on the collection, asking members not to abandon these begonias.

Kelton Parker, Curator of Begonias at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, thanked all those who wrote letters on behalf of the Garden's begonia collection.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ingeborg A. Foo, Secretary

The next Annual Business Meeting will be held in Miami, Florida, on Saturday, May 8, 1993.

Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting

November 7, 1992

The Board of Directors Meeting was held on November 7, 1992 at the home of Rudi Ziesenhenne, 1130 N. Milpas, Santa Barbara, California.

President Carol Notaras called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

There were 13 people present. Parliamentarian Margaret Lee waived the requirement of a quorum.

Margaret Lee read the Aims and Purposes of the Society.

Minutes of the August 21, 1992 Board Meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report: from August 1, 1992 to October 31, 1992, checking accounts \$1,554.51; savings accounts, \$42,794.19; for a total of \$44,348.70.

Committee Reports:

Round Robin: Virginia Hamann has over 40 flights going - even to Australia.

Convention: Elda Regimbál reported profit from 1992 Convention before taxes is \$14,077.18; after taxes, \$12,987.23; with 10% of the profits going to host branches, the total net profit (approx.) is \$11,688.51.

Charles Jaros reported that despite the hurricane the 1993 Convention will go on. The hotel was not damaged.

Gene Salisbury gave a brief report on plans for the 1994 Convention in Oklahoma City.

Seed Fund: Marilyn Goldstein will be given \$50 to use as a revolving fund.

Back Issues: Betty Tillotson resigned. Claire Frontera has volunteered to fill the chair.

Research Library: An inventory of materials is being made; Houston Knight will be asked to find the least expensive way to mail the materials to new chair Stephen Coppins.

Advertising: the Board voted to spend \$440 to advertise for one year in Porch and Garden.

Membership: John Ingles reported 79 Life Members, 142 Institutions, 1402 dues-paying members as of August 31, 1992.

Long Range Planning: Kay Tucker reported Buxton Branch would like to host the 1995 Convention in Boston. Board voted to accept. Next Board meeting will be held on January 30, 1993, at the home of Rudi Ziesenhenne, 1130 N. Milpas, Santa Barbara, California at 1:30 p.m. Respectfully submitted,

Ingeborg A. Foo, Secretary

Note: all Minutes are condensed because of space limitations. Any member may order a copy of the complete Minutes from the Secretary. Copies of Committee Reports may also be ordered. A stamped, self-addressed legal-size envelope would be appreciated.

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Elected Officers

- President.....Carol Notaras
2567 Green St., San Francisco, CA 94123
- Past President.....Jeannette Gilbertson
410 JoAnn Circle, Vista, CA 92084
- First Vice-President.....Gene Salisbury
P.O. Box 504, Tonkawa, OK 74653
- Second Vice-President...Millie Thompson
P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968
- Third Vice-President.....Mary Bucholtz
2411 Hendricks Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32207
- Secretary.....Ingeborg Foo
1050 Melrose Way, Vista, CA 92083
- Treasurer.....Eleanor Calkins
910 Fern St., Escondido, CA 92027

Appointed Chairmen & Directors

Audit Committee

Ed Bates

P.O. Box 230502, Encinitas CA 92023-0502

Ralph Corwin

1119 Loma Vista way, Vista CA 92084

Awards.....Thelma O'Reilly

10942 Sunray Place, La Mesa CA 91941

Ballot Counting.....Ronnie Nevins

1913 Aspen Circle, Fullerton, CA 92635

Begonian, Back Issues....Claire Frontera

3131 Patriot Lane, Sacramento, CA 95827

Book Store.....Anita Ruthenberg

1016 W. Arlington Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76110

Branch Relations.....Douglas Hahn

7736 Stonehill Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45230

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund....Marilyn Goldstein

1001 Diplomat Parkway, Hollywood FL 33091

Conservation Committee

Director.....Scott Hoover

718 Henderson Rd., Williamstown, MA 01267

Administrator.....Bruce C. Boardman

Box 69, Bluff Dale, TX 76433

Convention Advisor.....Elda Regimbal

3117 San Juan Dr., Fullerton, CA 92635

Convention Chairman.....Charles Jaros

2621 NW 23rd Court, Miami, FL 33142

Historian.....Norma Pfrunder

3484 Jefferson St., Riverside, CA 92504

Judging.....Maxine Zinman

Rt. 1, Box 73, Boyce, VA 22620

Long-Range Planning.....Kay Tucker

207 W. Southcross, San Antonio, TX 78221

Members at Large.....Thelma McRae

5471 S. Libby Rd. #15, Paradise CA 95969

Nomenclature.....Carrie Karegeannes

3916 Lake Blvd., Annandale, VA 22003

Parliamentarian.....Margaret Lee

1852 31st St., San Diego, CA 92102

Public Relations/Special Advertising.....

Russ Richardson

1854 Chancery Lane, Chamblee, GA 30341

Research.....Houston Knight

13455 Hadley St., Whittier, CA 90601

Research Librarian.....Stephen Coppins

30 Mygatt St., Binghamton NY 13905

Round Robin.....Virginia Hamann

Rt. 1, Box 10., Chester, IA 52134

Slide Library

Co-Chairman.....Daniel Haseltine

6950 W. Nelson St., Chicago, IL 60634

Co-Chairman.....Charles Jaros

2621 NW 23rd Court, Miami, FL 33142

OPENINGS:

Begonian editor,

Horticultural correspondent

BEGONIAN STAFF

Editor: Tamsin Boardman, P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale, TX 76433 (817) 728-3485

Nomenclature Editor: Jack Golding

Editorial Associates: Phyllis Bates, Bruce C. Boardman, Kit Mounger, Mary Weinberg

Advertising Staff:

Mini-Ads, Cynthia Bishop, 4150 Auburn-Folsom Rd., Loomis, CA 95659

Display Ads, Ann Salisbury, P.O. Box 504, Tonkawa, OK 74653

Plant Society Ads, Wanda Macnair, 177 Hancock St., Cambridge, MA 02139

For subscription, dues, circulation inquiries contact John Ingles, Jr. 157 Monument, Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617



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