

"THE HORACE TIRET STORY"

By Mark MacDougall

*"Ambition scorns the easy things
And leaves the old to seek the new.
The pride of all achievement springs
From what is difficult to do"
(Edgar A. Guest)*

The success which Horace M. Tiret has achieved in the field of fuchsia hybridizing has not come by accident. He has attained his high rank in this art by intense desire, studious effort, hard work and a great deal of patience over a considerable period of time. From his first interest in fuchsia breeding, nearly twenty years ago, Tiret has followed a specific program to develop each of the many fine forms and colors which he has originated. Most of Tiret's fuchsia creations have been developed through a carefully scheduled "five year plan." Some have taken longer. Rarely have any taken less.

Having no gardening facilities of his own at the time, 1944, Tiret grew his first seedlings, as did his well-known contemporary, Clement Schnabel, at the La Rochette Nursery of Victor Reiter in San Francisco. Much of his early fuchsia knowledge was gleaned through this association at la Rochette and by his acquaintance with the Victor Reiters, Senior and Junior, and with Gustave Niederholzer, another famous fuchsia breeder of that time.

It was at La Rochette that Tiret accomplished his first successful cross, the ever-popular RUBEO. As a seedling, RUBEO won first prize for the best semi-double fuchsia seedling at the 1946 San Francisco flower Show. The following year, 1947, it was commercially introduced by Tiret through the La Rochette Nursery.

RUBEO, a large unique flower of exceptional coloring and heavy substance, gained immediate popularity from the fuchsia growing public and its appeal has increase through the years. It was awarded a Certificate of Merit in 1949 by the American Fuchsia Society. RUBEO typifies many succeeding Tiret introductions and is a fine example of the inherent qualities and characteristics found in many of his varieties. Namely, good flower in color, form and substance coupled with easy-growing, vigorous habit. Tiret maintains the *flower itself* is not altogether the most important point to consider. The plant must also have a good growing habit to be successful. Tiret has attempted to follow this practical purpose in his hybridizing career.

Tiret readily admits that many fine fuchsias have been discovered or developed by breeders using more luck than knowledge. In fact many of the important breaks in fuchsia forms and colors have come about in an accidental manner and this will no doubt continue to be true in the future. For his part, however, Tiret has made it a point to be more scientific than just lucky in his breeding work.

Tiret believes that a successful fuchsia hybridizer should understand the basic principles of Mendel's Law, the law observed in the character inheritance of plants. Tiret also recommends study of the book, "The Genetics of Garden Plants" (Crane & Lawrence, 1947), from which he says he has gained a great amount of knowledge on this subject, Tiret is also a subscriber to the "Journal of Heredity," published by the American Genetic Association. Tiret states that many of the theories found in this journal can be applied to fuchsia

hybridizing. It is through this knowledge and following these teachings that Tiret believes much of his success has come.

Horace Tiret is a fuchsia breeder by avocation and a Certified Public Accountant by profession. For the past eleven years, Horace, his wife Elsie and their family have resided in a large house at 168 Lunado Court in the Ingleside Terrace district of San Francisco. The garden is located along the sides and at the rear of the home. It is comparatively small and exclusively planted in fuchsias. A high garden wall at the back of the property protects the plants from a certain amount of wind. Otherwise, most of Tiret's fuchsias are grown in the open, except for a small lath enclosure at one side of the house in which basket types are hung. The mature seedlings and stock plants are grown staked in the open ground in upright standard form. The culture of these plants is maintained by Mrs. Tiret and one of the Tiret sons. Horace states that his wife's assistance is invaluable to his work and without her help and interest in fuchsias he could never have become a fuchsia hybridizer.

Horace alone attends to the task of making the cross selections and carefully gathering the resulting seed from which his originals arise. He plants five to six thousand seeds annually. A small heated glasshouse is used for this purpose. About half of the seed planted germinate successfully. This number is gradually eliminated down to about seven hundred of the healthiest young plants. These are evaluated during the year and from then only a scant few are retained for further trail the following year.

In the past sixteen years Horace Tiret has introduced a total of seventy-one fuchsia varieties. Of these, no less than seventeen have received Certificate of Merit awards, the highly coveted honor presented to fuchsias of extraordinary quality by the American Fuchsia Society. This record is unique and unequalled to date.

Many of Tiret's varieties have proven themselves outstanding fuchsia favorites since being introduced and will be, without doubt, grown for many years to come. A respectable number of Tiret's fuchsias have constituted important break-thoughts in new color and form ranges which have greatly assisted the fuchsia development of most present day hybridizers.

The following are established varieties of exceptional quality and are favorites of the introducer:

RUBEO (1947). The variety with which Tiret made his debut as a hybridizer and also which won him his first A.F.S. Certificate of Merit.

JACK SHAHAN (1948). Named for a popular member of the A.F.S. A strong growing trailer entirely shaded rose bengal.

BOUFFANT (1949). A very popular show plant. A vigorous, willowy grower in the single trailer class with long white corolla and large spreading red sepals with a very heavy blooming habit.

DON PERALTA (1950). Named in honor of the Peralta Branch of the A.F.S. A very vigorous upright with large semi-double deep carmine red flowers.

SWINGTIME (1950). This all-time favorite is considered by many growers the most popular fuchsia of our time. It has won numerous honors and acclamades for its versatile capabilities and free blooming display of double shiny red and sparkling white flowers. Undisputedly the best in its classification.

ENCHANTED (1951). An enchanting double trailer in the "blue" group. This very beautiful fuchsia has recently "sported" from its original campanula blue corolla to pale lavender rose, FORT BRAGG (Weichart, 1957), and more recently from the latter to a white, lightly

veined red, with just a slight shading of orchid, MISS WASHINGTON (Mouncer, 1961). Both of these mutations have the identical form of flower and habit of growth as their parent ENCHANTED. Altogether, a most delightful threesome!

STREAMLINER (1951). A very striking fuchsia of unique and different form. This lovely semi-double trailer of very long slender, all deep red blooms also makes a perfect umbrella-type standard.

LACE PETTICOATS (1952). Double white which palest blush undertone. The culmination with its introduction of a number of exhaustive years of highly competitive effort by California fuchsia breeders to develop the all-white or nearly all-white double fuchsia. By producing LACE PETTICOATS and other noteworthy seedlings in this color and size range, Tiret believes he was the first to achieve the breakthrough into the large all-whites.

VOO DOO (1953). A personal favorite of Horace Tiret. He also states that the color range of this variety is the most difficult to accomplish. It is a real beauty with the darkest corolla of deep purple-violet reputedly found in a fuchsia. It is a double and a strong upright grower.

GEORGANA (1955). This is a very lovely, large double fuchsia in the soft pastel shades. The full corolla is pale blue and orchid. Tube and sepals are of delicate rose.

PAPA BLEUSS (1956). This highly esteemed variety was named in honor of Tiret's father-in-law. Its huge double corolla is of deep Bishops violet. Sepals are carmine rose. It is an upright that will make a very showy hanger when properly trained.

THUNDERBIRD (1957). A spectacular orange flushed semi-double with long pink sepals. Acclaimed *le roi* of the year of its introduction, this marvel of the fuchsia world has gained prominence and distinction each year since.

ANGELA LESLIE (1959). A huge self-pink double upright. One of the largest in the double pink class to date.

RAMBLING ROSE (1959). This variety created much favorable comment at all flower shows and fuchsia society displays when first exhibited. A natural trailer and exceptionally heavy bloomer in a color not previously found in trailing fuchsias. Double corolla and sepals of soft rose.

PINK FAVORITE (1960). Strictly a pot or border plant that is always loaded with very large, all pink double flowers. An unusual fuchsia in this class.

Tiret's 1962 output consists of two uprights, a semi-trailer and two trailers. The descriptions of all are lusciously inviting. Three "uncles" are included in the list, named after a long standing promise for three near-relative of the Tiret family. UNCLE MIKE, a trailer with contrasting white sepals and "lipstick red" corolla, perhaps has the most promise and appeal at their writing.

Horace Tiret is the only fuchsia hybridizer at the present time patenting fuchsias on a consistent basis. To date he has patented or patent applied for twenty-two of his fuchsia introductions. In addition to this he has trademarked two of his recent varieties.

Tiret states that he is pleased with the results achieved by the majority of his patented fuchsias.

The plant patent act is protection against the reproduction of patented fuchsias without the permission of the patent holder. By controlling the propagation of the patented fuchsia, the originator also controls the price for which the fuchsia sells. Patents through the U.S.

government cost a good deal of money. The benefits they offer, however, have for the most part, reimbursed Tiret the expense involved in patenting a fuchsia and also have aided his

in his general out-of-pocket coverage of producing new fuchsias. Actual profit, if any, is slight and of little consequence.

Horace Tired became a member of the American Fuchsia Society in 1947 and has principally affiliated himself with the San Francisco Branch. During his membership he has made many visitations to other branches and gardening organizations, showing fuchsias, presenting lectures and promoting the good of the order for the Society in general and fuchsias in particular.

At the Annual Administrative meeting of the American Fuchsias Society, January 28, 1954, Mr. John Paul Edwards, Past President of the A.F.S., presented Horace Tired with an A.F.S. Medal Of Achievement. This medal is the highest honor which the American Fuchsia Society can bestow and was awarded to Mr. Tired for "Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Fuchsia Hybridization."

Horace Tired has most certainly proven his worth of this high honor, both before and since, for his many splendid and original offerings to the Fuchsia World.

At the present, Horace Tired plans to continue in the furtherance of his favorite flower and foremost hobby. He optimistically believes in a great future for the fuchsia. He predicts new styles and forms, more intense and deeper colors, combined with different color contrasts and combinations. In short, Mr. Horace Tired predicts a bright and wonderful new world of fuchsias for the future and plants to be a part of it.

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