



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

(articles and photos selected from chapter newsletters, our journal **Gesneriads**, and original sources)

Volume 12, Number 10

October 2021

This issue includes photos of gesneriads blooming now, Dale Martens' tribute to Elvin McDonald, and The Annual Appeal.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!**
Mel Grice, Editor



Ginny Heatter photos

Ginny Heatter from New Jersey, USA sent these photos of *Primulina flavimaculata*. Note the interesting yellow markings on top of the flowers.



Gesneriads Blooming Now



×*Achimenaantha* 'Ballerina'
Ron Myhr

Achimenes 'MM's Andul'
Ginny Heatter

"I obtained rhizomes of *Achimenes* 'MM's Andul' at our chapter meeting in June and planted them in July. They have been growing on my balcony with several other achimenes. They get bright light all day with some direct sun late in the day. Now that it's cooler, I'll set up my little greenhouse so the other varieties that are in bud have a chance to bloom since that encourages rhizome production."





xSmithicodonia 'Heartland's Joy'
Ginny Heater



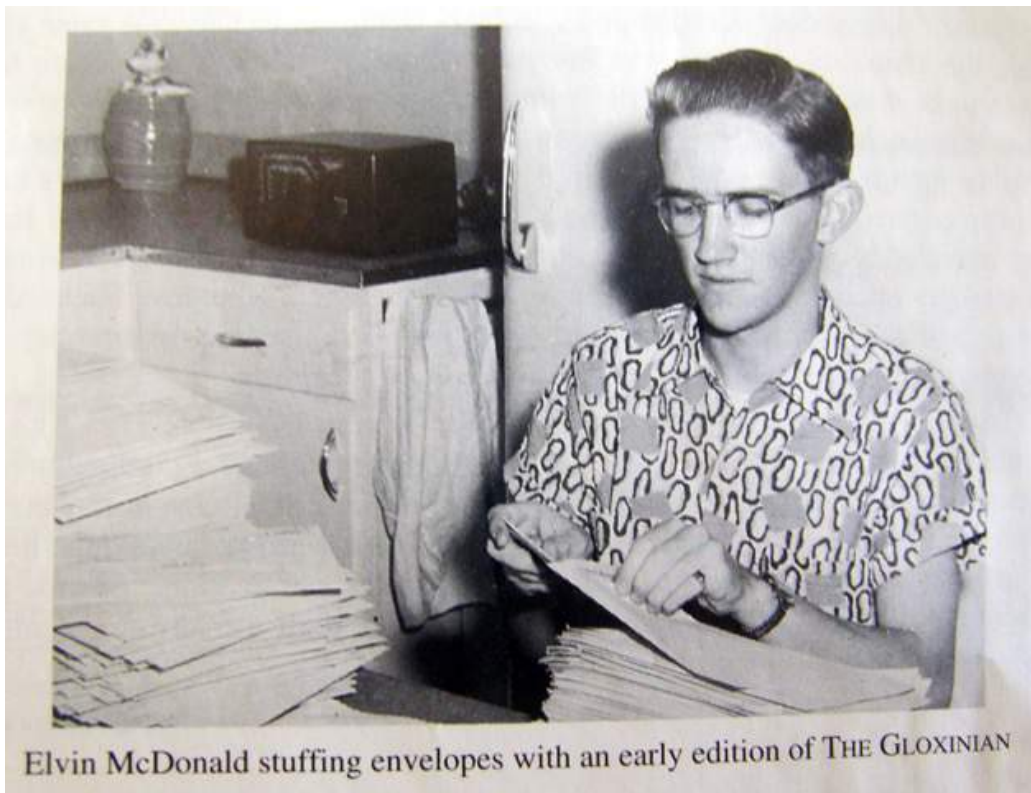
Sinningia 'Orange Sherbet'
Kevin Degner

Photos by the growers

Happy 70th Anniversary: Elvin McDonald and The Gesneriad Society

Dale Martens

When Elvin McDonald was 14 years old, he was struggling to grow some *Sinningia speciosa* (“Florist Gloxinia”) plants he’d ordered as tubers. He typed a letter to a magazine called **Flower Grower** on a typewriter he’d purchased with money from selling a prize pig. Elvin asked people with an interest in the Florist Gloxinia to write him a letter. His family’s mailbox became filled with letters. In 1951 with the assistance of some adults including Peggie Schulz who became Elvin’s **The Gloxinian** co-editor, Elvin founded the American Gloxinia Society. When he was asked about this, his response was that he was amazed his parents let him do it.



Elvin McDonald at 15

The founding of the American Gloxinia Society was in 1951. Today it is known as The Gesneriad Society because it has members from all around the world, and all gesneriads are featured including *Streptocarpus*, *Episcia*, *Primulina*, *Kohleria*, African violets, and many more! The Gesneriad Society has a judged show

during the annual convention held in a different city in the United States or Canada each year around July 4th. People from all over the world attend these conventions making it quite an international week of education and fun. We hope to have the 2022 convention in Tacoma, Washington, so if that happens, please join the fun!

When we moved back home to the Midwest after my husband retired, Elvin was the Botanical Educator and Ambassador Emeritus for the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden in Iowa. My husband and I visited him, and we got an amazing tour of the garden. Trust me, even in his 80's it's a challenge to keep up with him when he's walking.



Elvin McDonald at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

One very exciting event for me was in 2016 when James Baggett, long time editor of *Country Gardens* magazine and garden editor of *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine, wanted to feature Elvin in *Country Gardens* magazine. The title of the article was "Gesneriads: A Love Story." Elvin knew in advance this was happening and asked me if I'd bring some gesneriads to add to what he'd bring for the photo shoot. What fun to see how the photographer staged the plants!

Elvin McDonald and James Baggett
Country Gardens Magazine Early Spring 2016
Photographer: Greg Scheidemann

Gesneriads: A Love Story



Written and produced by Elvin McDonald
Photography by Greg Scheidemann

Gesneriads: *A Love Story*

Garden guru Elvin McDonald has never met a gesneriad he doesn't like. In fact, he founded the American Gloxinia Society at the age of 14. It was love at first sight.



Country Gardens Early Spring 2016

Dale Martens photos except where noted on photo

On Friday, September 17, 2021, the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden honored Elvin and his many contributions with an open house event. They also unveiled their new gesneriad contributions donated by several generous Gesneriad Society members who shipped plants, tubers, and rhizomes to Des Moines back in May. I attended this event and so did Anne Vidaver and Loris



Friday, September 17
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

We'll be honoring Elvin McDonald as we unveil our new gesneriad collection and celebrate Elvin's many contributions to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. Fun scarves and/or tweed jackets are encouraged for this open house-style event. There will be appetizers and a cash bar available. Thank you to members of The Gesneriad Society for supporting the growth of this collection. If you are inspired, please donate today at dmbotanicalgarden.com/Elvin

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Purtzer. Senior Horticulturist Leslie Hunter and Assistant Director of Horticulture Aaron Harpold, along with their knowledgeable team, did an outstanding job of growing the donations and displaying them. They even had an LED strip light garden set up.



Anne Vidaver and Loris Purtzer

It's amazing when you realize you are reading this newsletter and growing gesneriads because a 14-year-old boy wanted to form a group to study his favorite gesneriad!



The Gesneriad Society Annual Appeal

The [Annual Appeal](#) helps support gesneriad research, education, and conservation by ensuring that grant money is available for eligible applicants. The target fund for 2021 is **The Elvin McDonald Research Endowment Fund**. This fund provides scholarship grants for students and gesneriad researchers. This fund gives financial support to students as they do their research on gesneriads. All gesneriad members will benefit from the technical research from these students. Donate now! You may make a donation on line by using the link above.

The Gesneriad Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) U.S. tax-exempt corporation.

The full amount of a donation is tax deductible for U.S. members.

In time for the holidays, use Amazon and donate to The Gesneriad Society.

When you use [Amazon Smile](#), Amazon will donate .5% of each purchase to The Gesneriad Society. There is no extra cost to you, and you will be supporting the work of The Gesneriad Society in research, education, and conservation. Give it a try!

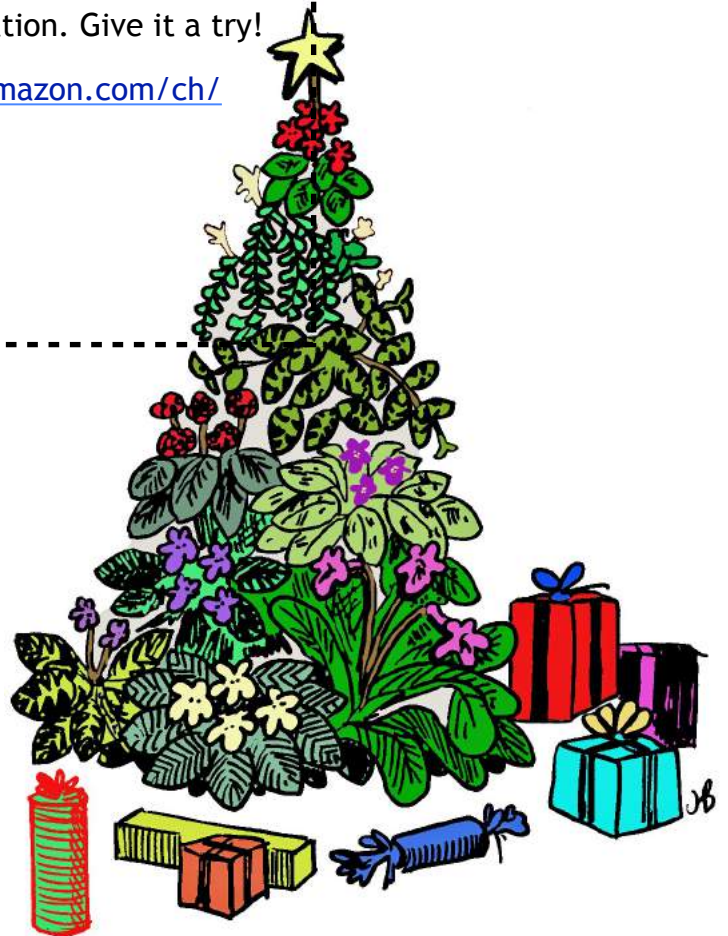
The URL for the hyperlink is <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/22-6059828>

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Happy Holidays!

John Beaulieu created this holiday tree originally in black and white and Stan Sudol added the color a few years later.

Thanks to both for sharing!





From the editor —
Special thanks go to Dale Martens for her tribute to Elvin McDonald and The Gesneriad Society.

If you have suggestions, comments, or items for possible inclusion in future issues, please feel free to contact me at melsgrice@gmail.com

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Donations

The Gesneriad Society, Inc. is a tax-exempt organization with an IRS section 501 (c)(3) status for donations. You can make your donations online at www.gesneriads.org. You may also send your donation (check payable to The Gesneriad Society) to:

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4932 - 88th Avenue West, University Place, WA 98467 USA
For additional information, contact: [<aagrevious@gmail.com>](mailto:aagrevious@gmail.com)

Membership and Changes of Address

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1122 East Pike Street, PMB 637, Seattle, WA 98122-3916 USA

Changes of Address — Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary [<gesneriadsocietymembership@gmail.com>](mailto:gesneriadsocietymembership@gmail.com) 90 days prior to moving to avoid missing an issue. The Society is not responsible for replacing issues missed because of late notification of address changes. Back issues may be ordered from The Gesneriad Society Publications.

Renewals — Send dues to the Membership Secretary. A Renewal Notice is sent two months prior to the expiration date of your membership. (The expiration date is printed on your mailing label/ membership card received with each copy of *Gesneriads*.) Please remit your dues prior to the expiration date to avoid missing an issue as we are not responsible for replacing issues missed because of late payment of dues. Back issues may be ordered from Publications.

Application for Membership — *The Gesneriad Society, Inc.*

WELCOME — membership in our international society includes quarterly issues of *Gesneriads* — *The Journal for Gesneriad Growers*, a copy of *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*, a packet of gesneriad seeds and a wealth of information about our chapters, flower shows, publications, research, programs and seed fund. Membership begins upon receipt of dues.

New Member Date _____

Renewal Membership # _____

Name _____
FAMILY NAME GIVEN NAME MIDDLE INITIAL

Address _____
STREET

CITY STATE ZIP CODE COUNTRY

Email _____ Telephone _____

Chapter Affiliation (list only one) _____

(Rates in US\$)	Mailing in US 1 year	Mailing in US 3 years	Mailing outside US 1 year	Mailing outside US 3 years
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25	\$70	\$30	\$85
<input type="checkbox"/> Household	\$26	\$73	\$31	\$88
<input type="checkbox"/> Journal Subscription (organizations, chapters, affiliates)	\$25	\$70	\$30	\$85
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Life	Mailing in USA \$375		Mailing outside USA \$450	
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Option	Electronic journal copy (no print copy) for Individual or Household Members \$20 (one year), \$55 (three years) anywhere in the world			

I wish to make a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

Elvin McDonald Research Endowment Fund Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund
 Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund Students and Speakers Convention Fund Conservation Fund
 In Honor Memory of _____

Please make checks or money orders payable in US\$ on a USA bank to: **The Gesneriad Society**
 Or, charge my VISA or MasterCard
 Card # _____ Exp. Date _____
 Signature _____ Amount _____

Mail to: **The Gesneriad Society Membership Secretary, Bob Clark,
1122 East Pike St., PMB 637, Seattle, WA 98122-3916 USA**

For application online: www.gesneriads.org