

In Memoriam

Remembering Kit Knotts, 1943-2023

By Rich Sacher

When I first met Kit at my nursery in 1996, she was already a prolific grower of waterlilies. She invited me to visit her in Florida, where I joined her in giving a joint lecture on tropical water lilies at a Merritt Island nursery. Thus began our three decades of friendship, sharing and mutual support.

I was charmed when I saw the dozen interconnecting ponds of waterlilies at Ben and Kit's beach property. But the biggest surprise was that Kit was growing a *Victoria cruziana*! I casually suggested that if they built one really big pond, they could grow both *Victoria* species and hybridize them. When I visited again the next year, they had already built a huge *Victoria* pond, just steps from the beach!

This began a decade of Kit's *Victoria* hybridizing and detailed research, and her creation of the Victoria-Adventure website (www.victoria-adventure.org), with articles by contributors from around the world. Kit produced thousands of *Victoria* seeds, both species and hybrids, which she shared for free with anyone who wanted them. Kit also created the website Water Gardeners International (watergardenersinternational.org), where she solicited hundreds of articles on waterlilies and related subjects. Those two websites have become a worldwide treasury of aquatic plant information, celebrated by both hobbyists and professionals.

Kit's garden in Cocoa Beach was a paradise of orchids, tropical plants, and waterlilies. During Kit's open house tours, literally hundreds of people visited her garden over the years, including waterlily hybridizers who met to discuss our visions for new waterlilies, and our techniques for trying to produce them.

We remember and celebrate Kit Knotts, for her passion for *Victorias* and waterlilies, for her kindness in sharing plants, seeds and information, and for her success in bringing together our global community of waterlily lovers.

About the Author

Rich Sacher is a founding and life member of the IWGS, a past board member, and has been a frequent lecturer and writer for many groups and publications. In 2006, he was inducted into the IWGS Hall of Fame in recognition of outstanding achievements in sharing his lifelong passion for and knowledge of *Nymphaea* through hybridizing, public display, writings, and teaching.

