

The Iris Standard

Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

An affiliate of the
American Iris Society

Volume 12 Issue 3 – Summer 2017

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**The Ontario Iris Society has a
Facebook page.**

*We hope you will 'like' us then upload
your pictures, share your experiences
and ask questions. It's the visitors to the
page that make it a success!*

ONIS Membership Fees

1-year single: \$10	1-year family: \$15
3-year single: \$25	3-year family: \$40

Check the ONIS website for details
<https://sites.google.com/site/ontarioirissociety/>

Visit the AIS TWIKI

The IRIS ENCYCLOPEDIA of The American
Iris Society, <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view>

Find information about irises, hybridizers
and different iris societies.

Editor's Message

It started out as a beautiful spring. Sure, we had lots of rain and cool temperatures but our iris garden never looked better. In fact, our garden absolutely amazed me. Irises that hadn't bloomed in years decided it was time to prove they were still alive. 'Maslon', which I thought had long since 'disappeared', bloomed its little heart out in early June. Clumps of MDBs and SDBs bloomed for three weeks. Stalks on our IBs, BBs and TBs were tall and straight while blooms displayed deep, rich colours. I was in iris heaven! Sadly spring rains turned into summer rains, and it doesn't seem to want to stop. So, if you find yourself indoors due to more rain, grab a 'cuppa' and read on!

In this edition of *The Iris Standard* you will read about an iris 'dig' that Terry and I did. One of our members was downsizing and looking for a new home for her irises. Who better to call than the Ontario Iris Society!

There is a report on the MIS Convention held in Lafayette, Indiana. Terry and I opted for this smaller convention so we wouldn't miss too much of our garden...and lucky we did! We were peak median bloom for the President's Open Garden, the day after our return.

You will also read about the ONIS Annual Flower Show. It was a delight this year to have 'Richmond Gold' on display in the Historic Iris section (see right). This iris was hybridized by R.D. Little, one of our founding members. It is a lovely deep gold which would make a nice addition to any garden!



Finally, the results from both the People's Choice ballot at the flower show and the top five irises selected at the President's Open Garden are listed. Maybe you'll find some 'must-haves'! Enjoy, stay dry and Happy Canada Day!

Kate

Thanks to Our Generous Members

by Kate Brewitt

The call came in mid-March. One of our members was selling her home and her new place did not have the same garden space. As a result, she was looking for a new home for her irises. Did we want to come and dig any of them before she moved? Naturally our answer was an emphatic 'You bet'!

Helen has been an avid iris collector for many years. We have spent many an iris season comparing notes. Through floods, droughts and iris borer infestations we have shared stories on our successes...and our failures. Helen, her late husband, Raymond, and her brother, Jim, have attended many ONIS auctions so she has some lovely irises like Barry Blyth's popular 'Decadence'...it still stings a bit that I lost that one to Helen's unwavering bidding arm!

Laid out in a bed-in-bed wooden framework Helen told us how her garden developed, getting larger with each passing year to accommodate more and more irises. As a result, we found a mixture of old and new irises. The older ones included many of the Dykes Memorial Medal winners; 'Argus Pheasant', 'Cherie' and 'Stepping Out' to name but a few. The newer irises included some recent Schreiner's introductions such as 'Century Bound' (2015) and 'Servin' Up Sparkle' (2015). One that she insisted we take was 'Blue My Mind' (Schreiner, 2014) which had been a popular iris at the AIS National Convention in Portland in 2015. (Note: these newer irises will be offered at this year's rhizome sale in August at the TBG.)



Helen, and her dog, supervising while Terry digs.

As the dig progressed Helen pointed out her favourite irises and provided us with commentary on how well each one grew. As she did this I could sense the passion that she held for them. I also sensed that she was going to miss them.



l. to r.- Terry, Helen (with one of her dogs) and Jim

Before we knew it, we were out of pots. We had dug up a wonderful variety of irises. At the same time we potted up some plants for Helen and Jim to take to their new garden. We then loaded the van, said our good-byes and headed for home.

Thanks to Helen and Jim for their generosity. It was very kind of them to think of sharing their irises with ONIS. All irises donated will be sold for the benefit of the club with proceeds going towards future ONIS events. We know our members and fellow iris lovers will be happy to provide your irises with a good home!



Saying goodbye to a garden well loved.

2017 MIS Convention Award Winners

I am always reluctant to leave my garden when attending an iris convention during May. I feel I am going to miss the best of our bloom. So it was with a heavy heart that I bid farewell to our irises as we backed out of the driveway. The five days we were going to be away seemed like an eternity!

This year's MIS convention was promoted as a mini-convention and, with approximately 80 registrants, it was. The first day a few of us took a tour to the Meigs Horticultural Research Farm at Purdue University. We learned about their research trials on various agricultural crops. Did you know Indiana has wineries? Still in its infancy, the Hoosier wine industry is one of the fastest growing agricultural industries in the state. Who knew!!!

During the three days of the convention there were lots of opportunities to meet with old friends and make new ones. The organizing committee kept us busy with games, presentations, raffles for plants and bottles of Indiana wine and an auction.

The two days of garden tours were rainy however like the iris-loving troupers that we are we simply suited up with rain gear and umbrellas and marched off to the gardens. Iris bloom was just past peak with the MTBs looking their best. In the end we voted on our favourites and the results were tabulated. Here are the winners...

Don Waters Award

(Best clump from a Region 6 hybridizer)



'Breakfast in Bed' MTB (Chuck Bunnell, 2014)

Hal and Dorothy Stahly Award

(Best clump from a hybridizer outside Region 6)



'At Last My Blue' MTB (Ken Fisher, 2015)

Best Standard Dwarf Bearded (SDB) Iris



'Portland Pink' (Black, 2015)

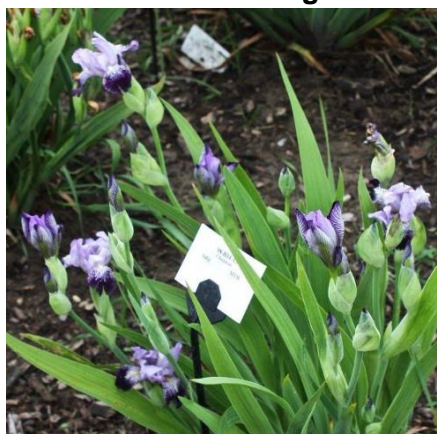
Best Intermediate Bearded (IB) Iris



'Deep Secret' (Lauer, 2015)

Best Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB) Iris

'At Last My Blue' (Fisher, 2015) – See picture under Hal and Dorothy Stahly Award.

Best Border Bearded (BB) Iris*'Impertinent' (Filardi, 2011)***Best Aril-Bred (AB) Iris***'Hearts of Hearts' (Black, 2015)***Best Seedling***98-B34-13 (Chapman)*

As for my garden, it was just fine when we got home. The plants had benefited from a couple of days of hot temperatures so there was lots of bloom for the President's Open Garden the day after our return!

ONIS President's Open Garden

By Kate Brewitt

What is always fun about the President's Open Garden is that we never know which irises will be in bloom. Of the over 120 cultivars in bloom this year, many were the same as last year however many were different presenting a whole new experience for our garden visitors.

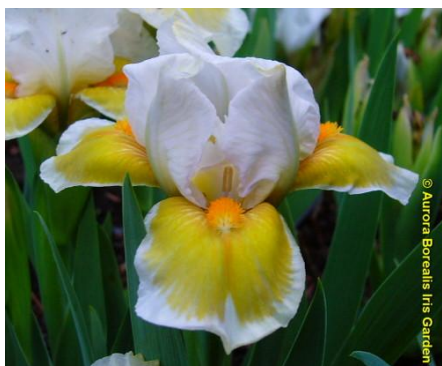
The iris that I was sure was going to be the most popular was the SDB 'Teagan'. As if knowing it is in contention for this year's Cook-Douglas Medal, our clump put on an impressive show. Dozens of soft blue/white blooms with brilliant yellow beards danced above the foliage eliciting approving comments from visitors as they entered the garden.

*'Teagan' (D.Spoon, 2009)*

However, the most popular iris was the candy pink SDB with hot pink beards, 'Pussycat Pink'. So popular in fact that most visitors went home with a pot of this iris in hand.

*'Pussycat Pink' (Black, 2006)*

Running a close second in popularity was Bennett Jones' 'Murphy's Law'. The dark yellow fall spot on this iris was more prominent than usual covering most of the fall.



'Murphy's Law' (Jones, 2004)

Next in popularity was Don Spoon's, 'Sonador'. Light ruffling and flared falls add to the crisp form of this iris. The dark lavender-blue beard makes for a stunning contrast against the yellow-brown fall spot.



'Sonador' (D.Spoon, 2011)

Rounding out the top five favourites were three more SDBs, 'Eye of the Tiger', which was in the top five last year, 'Pink Twilight' and the Cook-Douglas contender, 'Teagan'.



'Eye of the Tiger' (Black, 2008)



'Pink Twilight' (Niswonger, 1998)

Visitors who participated in this year's selection had their names entered in a draw for a free 1-year membership to the Ontario Iris Society. This year's winner was L. Hawthorn of Toronto. Congratulations and enjoy!

ONIS Annual Flower Show at the TBG

By Kate Brewitt

With rain in the forecast for the Saturday night before the flower show, Terry and I decided to cut our bloom stalks that evening...something we'd never done before. We cut stalks that were just about to bloom hoping they would open for the show. We put them in vases and left them in the van as overnight temperatures outside were going to be colder than our basement.

In the end we were rewarded for our efforts with only three of the 25 stalks not opening. 'Celebration Song' was one such stalk but exhibitors and visitors were delighted to watch it slowly open as the day progressed. Even though it never fully bloomed it made it into the top 10 of the People Choice Ballot. Just goes to show (no pun intended) there is more to a bloom stalk than just the flower!

Eight exhibitors entered over 40 bloom stalks in this year's show. The cool, wet spring had members lamenting that the bloom on their irises was a few days behind. This resulted in a colourful display of early TBs and medians. There were even two SDBs seedlings to judge!

Thanks to everyone who brought their bloom stalks and to those who helped with the set up and take down. Congratulations to all our trophy winners!

ONIS Awards

R.D. Little Trophy Best Specimen (Queen of the Show)



Exhibitor: Kate Brewitt
Iris: TB 'Quantum Leap' (Sutton, 2004)

Toronto Region Award Second Best Specimen (Princess of the Show)



Exhibitor: Lyn Hickey
Iris: TB 'No Place Like Home' (Black, 2011)

Verna Laurin Plaque - Best Historic Iris



Exhibitor: Kate Brewitt
Iris: TB 'Champagne Elegance' (Niswonger, 1986)

W.J. Taylor Trophy - Best Seedling



Seedling 01-49-01 – Jinny Missons

F.W. Caulfield Trophy - Highest total points in the Tall Bearded classes – Terry Laurin.

AIS Awards

AIS Silver Medal Certificate

Exhibitor with highest number of 1st place ribbons –
Terry Laurin

AIS Bronze Medal Certificate

Exhibitor with 2nd highest number of 1st place
ribbons – Kate Brewitt

Ethel Anson S. Peckham Award (AIS Region 2 Award for Best Historic)

TB 'Champagne Elegance' (Niswonger, 1986)
exhibited by Kate Brewitt

People's Choice Ballot from the ONIS Annual Flower Show

Once again the results from this year's People's
Choice ballot demonstrated a variety of preferences
with people selecting a wide range of colour
palettes, from the soft tones of tan and apricot to
the warm, rich tones of burgundy and gold.

The most popular iris was 'Earthborn'. The large,
fuzzy orange beard was the feature on this iris that
seemed to attract attention. People also liked the
colour combination noting how different it looked.

Cont'd on next page...

1st choice: TB – 'Earthborn'

The second placed iris, 'Champagne Elegance', is an historic iris from 1986. People noticed the pale pink colouring in the standards which nicely accented the soft apricot-coloured falls.

2nd choice: TB – 'Champagne Elegance'

The third choice, 'Hot Spice', is a combination of muted gold and burgundy. People commented on the deep, rich colours. Definitely different!

3rd choice: IB – 'Hot Spice'4th choice: TB – 'Thornbird'

In fourth place was the 'love-it or hate-it' iris, 'Thornbird'. For those who liked it the dark purple horns, which contrasted against the pale greenish tan falls, are what caught their eye. Some people had never seen horns on an iris and thought it was novel.

5th choice: TB – 'Twilight Fancies'

In fifth place was the blue-violet bi-tone 'Twilight Fancies'. People liked the soft ruffling and form of this iris.

Thanks to all who participated with a special thank-you to those who made comments on their ballots. It is nice to know the reasons behind your selections!

If you attend our August rhizome sale, don't forget to bring your coupon for a free rhizome!

(If you want to know how your choices compare, email me at oniseditor@gmail.com and I will send your list. – kate)



Youth Matters

In May some of our youth members and their Brownie pack had a chance to learn about irises. They were given a talk about irises then each was given an iris rhizome to plant in a pot so they could take it home. Some of the girls are already keen gardeners so they were very pleased to receive their plant. Here is one of our youth potting her iris.



Potting an iris rhizome

ONIS Youth Show Results

The Youth Division saw three entries in this year's show. Awards were given by our judges as follows,

'Cameo Queen' by A. Missons – 2nd place

'Neon Blue' exhibited by I. Missons – 2nd place

'Wabash' exhibited by I. Missons – 3rd place

The results prove that our youth members' show skills are quickly developing. Keep up the good work!

For information about the ONIS Youth group, contact Jinny Missons at jojimiss@sympatico.ca



NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY (AIS)

From January 1 until October 1, 2017 ONIS is offering to pay part of your new* AIS membership.

AIS Membership Type	AIS Membership Fee in US\$	ONIS Reimbursement**
E-membership	\$15 US	2/3 of fee in CDN dollar equivalent
1-year Single	\$30 US	2/3 of fee in CDN dollar equivalent

Go to www.irises.org

and

click on the 'JOIN AIS' link.



* 'New' defined as someone who has never been an AIS member or has not been an AIS member for the past 10 years. Only one reimbursement per 'new' member allowed.

** Reimbursements will be made once confirmation of membership has been submitted to ONIS by the AIS Region 2 membership chair.

Visit the AIS TWIKI

The IRIS ENCYCLOPEDIA of The American Iris Society, <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view>

Learn about hybridizers, view articles, books and catalogues in *The AIS Hager/DuBois Memorial Library*, watch videos from *The Iris Video Library* and much, much more!



ONIS Matters

In the Months Ahead

ONIS Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale
August 13 – 1 pm – Toronto Botanical Garden
 777 Lawrence Ave. E., Toronto.

This is a great opportunity to buy irises at unheard-of prices.

Table sales start at 12:00 pm for members only. This is a sale of rhizomes provided by ONIS members from their personal collections. If you attended our June flower show and received a coupon, don't forget to bring it.

The rhizome auction starts at 1 pm. Please arrive early to get your bidder's number. To see pictures of some of the irises in this year's auction go to the ONIS website and click on the link to Pinterest. Please note, table sales will be suspended during the auction and will resume following the auction.

ONIS Members: If you are donating rhizomes please email Terry at tlaurin@rogers.com with the cultivar names. He will get pictures. On the day of the sale, please arrive by 10:30 am with your rhizomes trimmed, washed and labelled. This will give the set-up committee time to price and sort.

AIS Region 2 Annual Meeting
October 20 – 21, 2017
Hampton Inn and Suites, Victor, NY

Hosted by the Greater Rochester Iris Society. The guest speaker will be Chad Harris of Mt. Pleasant Iris Farm in Washougal, WA. His presentation "Water Lovers of Asia" will look at iris ensata, iris laevigata and the new species-cross, "pseudata". Watch the AIS Region 2 website for details.
http://www.aisregion2.org/region2_013.htm



'Violet Swallows' (Harris, 2016)

ONIS Annual Meeting **October/November – Port Perry, ON**

The ONIS Board meets to discuss plans for the upcoming year. All are welcome. Details to be announced in the next edition.

Welcome New and Renewing ONIS Members!

L. Hawthorn – Toronto, ON

V. Lo – Toronto, ON

S. Thompson – Whitby, ON

R. Walker – Toronto, ON

Reminder to All AIS Judges

For those ONIS members who are AIS Judges, just a reminder of upcoming deadlines,

1. **August 1** – Deadline to vote your AIS official ballot. Email Gerry Snyder if you have not received a UserID and password, AISAwards@irises.org
2. **August 8** – Region 2 Judges' Training Activity reports must be submitted to Wendy Roller our Region 2 JT Chair. Printable copies of the report can be found on the Region 2 website. If you need assistance, please email Wendy at gwr67@frontier.com.

NOTE: this due date is a week later than previous years.

The Iris Standard is published four (4) times a year; Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. Materials submitted must be received by December 1st (Winter), March 1st (Spring), June 1st (Summer) and September 1st (Autumn). Submissions may be edited for style and clarity.

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