

The Iris Standard

Newsletter of the
Ontario Iris Society

An affiliate of the
American Iris Society

Volume 13 Issue 4 – Autumn 2018

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'Foolish Dreamer' (Keppel, 2011)
One of the many beautiful irises
available at this year's auction
See pictures starting on page 4

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/>

Editor's Message

We had an early Christmas this year! Our Winterberry order arrived August 20th. The wrapping paper flew across the room as we anxiously opened the box of freshly dug irises. We received lots of extras including a 2018 Don Spoon introduction, 'Summer Peach'. It is a rebloomer that is a cross between 'Casino Cruiser' and 'Corn Dance'. Since 'Corn Dance' has rebloomed for us we are hopeful that this iris will perform equally as well. I am already looking forward to next iris season...but first, we have to get through winter!



'Summer Peach' →

The first weekend after Labour Day sure felt like winter. Our house dipped to 18° but instead of turning on our furnace I donned heavy socks, a long sleeve shirt and a wool sweater. I 'weathered' the cool spell, and good thing as the following week we were back in the heat and humidity. Our reblooming irises love the warm days and cool nights. These days I am on 'bud watch' however I have yet to come across any even though Terry has had reports of rebloom in Lindsay, ON.

In this edition of The Iris Standard there is a review of our August auction. We are always pleasantly surprised by the numbers of people who come out for the fun. In President's Pointers, Terry continues to work through the different iris classes and has put together a list of his favourite MTBs from our garden.

Finally, I thought it would be interesting to look at Dykes Memorial Medal winners in other countries. This medal was instituted by the British Iris Society so they hold the die and supply it to other countries when they award it...who knew!?

Hope you enjoy!

Kate

President's Pointers

By Terry Laurin

I thought it was time for another installment of 'President's Favourites'. This time I would like to share with you the names of my favourite Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB) irises, but first, a brief history...

Back in the 1930's when E.B. Williamson and his daughter Mary were hybridizing irises ('Wabash', 1936) they found that among the thousands of iris seedlings that they grew there were a few that did not grow very tall. Their flowers were very small but nicely formed and in proportion with the stems and leaves. E.B. called them 'runts' but Mary liked them as did her friends, Ethel Peckham and Thura Truax Hires (married to the son of Charles Hires of root beer fame and a distant descendant of mine), both directors of the American Iris Society (AIS). Ethel liked them so much she wrote an article for the April 1929 AIS Bulletin where she coined the term 'table irises' because she thought they were the ideal size and proportion for use in flower arrangements. It was not until the early 1950s that an official class was established for this type of iris and hence miniature tall bearded irises were born!*

That said, here are my favourite MTBs from our garden.

1. 'Enriched' (Jim Craig, 2000)

To me this is a 'perfect' iris in the sense that the colours are vibrant and the flower is perfectly formed. At one of the AIS conventions I had dinner with Jim and his wife, Vicky, where I mentioned how much I liked this iris. Jim was very pleased to receive the compliment. To this day, this is one of my favourite irises, period!



2. 'Dividing Line' (C. Bunnell, 2005)

This iris was the first MTB to win the Dykes Memorial Medal in 2014. It has been a favourite of mine since I first saw it at the 2009 AIS Convention in Kansas. At subsequent conventions it was easily identifiable in any garden which is an important trait for an iris. It performs well in different climates as well as my own. It always has seven to nine buds on each stalk resulting in over two weeks of bloom.



3. 'Color By Twos' (K. Fisher, 2009)

I immediately like this MTB when I saw it at the 2011 Median iris convention in Oklahoma. It has proven to be a great performer in our garden. It produces multiple bloom stalks with plenty of buds. After dividing the clump last year it quickly increased to provide a colourful display of flowers this year - a great trait for any iris. You may be saying that this is the same colouring as 'Enriched' however the falls on this one are more purple and the beards are orange. Trust me, there is a difference.



*Reference: Mahan, Clarence E., "Classic Irises and the Men and Woman Who Created Them", 2007

4. 'Lady Emma' (F. Jones, 1986)

This is a garden must-have for me simply because rebloom in the autumn is usually guaranteed. In my mind the autumn blooms look richer in colour than the spring blooms however this could simply be because they are the only flowers in bloom in October. The neighbours love it.

**5. 'Hoosier Belle' (C. Bunnell, 2012)**

Another MTB that has good form. It performs well for us with multiple bloom stalks. The veining on the falls add interest to the flower.



So if you are looking for an iris you can use in floral displays or one that takes up less space in the garden than their cousins, the tall bearded, give MTBs a try. I think you will be pleasantly surprised. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at tlaurin@rogers.com.

**Ed Jowett****President of the Canadian Iris Society**

We have been notified of the passing of Ed Jowett, long time President of the Canadian Iris Society (CIS). Ed was president of the Society for almost thirty years. He was a driving force behind the group. Our condolences to the Jowett family.

**Visit the
AIS Iris Encyclopedia**

The IRIS ENCYCLOPEDIA of the American Iris Society is a great resource for information about all things iris. Recent upgrades have made it better than ever. <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!

Join the American Iris Society

Annual Single: \$30 US / Dual: \$35 US
Triennial Single: \$70 US / Dual: \$85 US
(Includes a quarterly bulletin)

Youth, without Bulletin - \$8 US
Youth, with Bulletin - \$12 US

A one (1) year electronic membership, or e-membership, is also available for \$15 US.

[Click here](#) to go to the American Iris Society website and a list of additional membership types.

“Gee, That Was Fun!”
ONIS August Iris Auction

by Kate Brewitt

As tends to be the norm these days, it was a horribly hot, sunny day when Terry and I went to dig irises for the ONIS auction at Tara Perennial Farm. As always Marion’s daughter Lisa generously gave her time to guide us through the rows of irises as we searched for the ones we had on our ‘wish list’. Both she and Marion provided us with cultural advise on the different irises...it is amazing how in touch they are with each cultivar! When the digging was done we felt we had a great selection for the auction.



Tara Perennial Farm, Tara, ON

The theme for this year’s auction was ‘Award Winners’. We had many of the irises that were in contention for the 2018 Wister Medal and some that were up for the Dykes Memorial Medal. There were also some previous Dykes Medal winners. In short, a pretty stunning collection of irises was in the offering.



‘Daring Deception’ (Johnson, 2012)
Runner-up for the 2018 Wister Medal

It was looking like we were going to have a small auction as bidders were slow to arrive. Early birds, Charlie and Karen, were anticipating all the lovely irises they were going to take home while Lyn worked on her strategy for acquiring ‘Gypsy Lord’, one she has wanted for many years.



‘Gypsy Lord’ (Keppel, 2006)
2015 Dykes Medal Winner

As the hands on clock neared the one o’clock start the room suddenly came alive as bidders rushed through the doors, got their numbers and draw tickets then took their seats. In the end we had yet another full house. Bidding was brisk as bidders tried to outbid each other for their favourites.

On August 13, the day after the auction, the AIS award winners were announced. A couple of lucky bidders went home with award winners. Notta Lemon and Strawberry Shake won the Wister Medal and ‘Sharp Dressed Man’ was first runner up for the Dykes Medal.



‘Notta Lemon’ (Burseen, 2010)
Winner of the 2018 Wister Medal



'Strawberry Shake' (Keppel, 2012)
Winner of the 2018 Wister Medal



'Sharp Dressed Man' (Johnson, 2010)
First Runner-up for the Dykes Memorial Medal

As for Lyn, her strategy worked. She successfully out-bid others for 'Gypsy Lord' as well as a couple of other irises. I know I found myself lowering my bidder's number when I realized her determination to have the iris was greater than mine. Good on ya, Lyn!

And as everyone gathered up their booty one of this year's new attendees could be heard saying, "Gee, that was fun! I can hardly wait until next year!"...and neither can we!

Did you know?

The Other Dykes Memorial Medal Winners

The Dykes Memorial Medal was instituted by the British Iris Society in 1926 to honour William Rickatson Dykes (1877-1925), a founder of that society and a noted English researcher, hybridizer and gardener as well as the writer of the authoritative monograph, *The Genus Iris*. The Dykes Medal is the highest award an iris can receive.

Several other Dykes Medals are presented by the British Iris Society to other iris societies. These are the highest awards in their respective nations. The American Dykes is for the best iris bred by an American Hybridizer while the Australian and New Zealand medals are for their respective hybridizers. The French Dykes Memorial Medal was initially awarded in 1928 and continued through 1938 however it was suspended because of war. It was never reinstated. Here's a look at some of 'the other' Dykes Memorial Medal winners.

British Dykes Memorial Medal (2017)

Siberian 'Cloud Over Clee' (Jennifer Hewitt, 2009)



Australian Dykes Memorial Medal (2017)

TB 'Our Man Buck' (Graeme Grosvenor, 2015/16)



The New Zealand Dykes Memorial Medal (2014)

TB 'Atavus' (Alison Nicholl, 2007/08)





ONIS Matters
In the Months Ahead

AIS Region 2 Annual Meeting

October 19 – 20, 2018

Delmar Presbyterian Church, Delmar, NY

Hosted by the Capital Hudson Iris Society (CHIS). Bonnie Nichols, President of the Novelty Iris Society and owner of Hillcrest Iris and Daylily Gardens in Mesquite, Texas will be our guest speaker. Her presentation “Novelty Irises: Looking Forward, Looking Back” will look at novelty iris, past and present. There will also be 3 hours of classroom Judges’ Training. Details can be found on the AIS Region 2 website. http://www.aisregion2.org/region2_013.htm



‘Full Disclosure’ (T.Johnson, 2013)
One example of a novelty iris.

ONIS Annual Meeting

October 28, 2018 – 10:30 am

Aurora, ON (new location)

The ONIS Board will review the past year and discuss upcoming events for 2019. If you are interested in attending, please contact Kate at oniseditor@gmail.com before October 22nd for details.

**American Iris Society (AIS)
National Convention**
**Hosted by AIS Region 14 –
Northern California, Nevada
and Hawaii**
April 23 - 27, 2019



Convention hotel is the San Ramon Marriott Hotel, 2600 Bishop Drive, San Ramon, CA 94583 which is 40 miles outside San

Francisco. Brief descriptions of the five guest gardens on the tour have been set up on the convention website. Click on the links here to access.

- [The C&L Garden in Sonoma](#)
- [The Cummins Garden in Scott's Valley](#)
- [Dry Creek Garden in Union City](#)
- [Frannie's Garden in Elk Grove](#)
- [The Horton Garden in Loomis](#)

Details will be posted on the convention website: <http://aisconvention2019.org> as they become available.

**Welcome New and Renewing
ONIS Members!**

K. Lockyear – Toronto, ON

H. Tengesdal – Lindsay, ON



The Ontario Iris Society has a Facebook page.

- We hope you will ‘like’ us then...*
- upload your pictures,
 - share your experiences
 - ask questions.



Youth Matters

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

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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