

2016 HIPS Honoraries and Awards Annual Report

The Honoraries & Awards Committee is made up of a chairperson and 12 past recipients of the HIPS Distinguished Service Award.

The committee chose 2 recipients for 2016 HIPS Distinguished Service Award, Anner Whitehead of Richmond, Virginia and Milan Blazek of the Czech Republic.

Thank you,

Paul W. Gossett
HIPS Honoraries & Awards Committee Chairperson

HIPS Board of Directors
Bylaws Committee End-of-Year Report for 2016

During the winter of 2016-2017, the HIPS Bylaws Committee of Dave Prichard, Shaub Dunkley, Susan Flow, and Nancy McDonald did a large amount of research on previous HIPS Bylaws and policies. We reviewed AIS bylaws and those of other non-profit corporations.

When the 2016 growing season arrived, we agreed to focus on other HIPS activities until winter came again.

We are now in a review process, re-reading the many pages of notes we assembled last winter, and in February we will reconvene to decide on our suggestions for the revised HIPS bylaws. We hope to be able to present these bylaws to HIPS members in an article in the Spring 2017 ROOTS, so members can vote on them. With the bylaws themselves, we will include an explanation for each of our suggested changes.

Nancy McDonald, Chair, HIPS Bylaws Committee

Commercial Sources 2016 Report

	Start of year	End of year
Number of vendors	52	54
Number of varieties	5330	5619
Varieties with 0 vendors	732	709

Additional vendors were found by searching various sources, but many have few historic irises and/or are not very interested in the historic iris market. Some are very cooperative; some are not. The decision was made to not list vendors who offer less than 20 or so historic varieties unless they are offering cultivars that only one or two vendors sell. We also list vendors who are in the process of increasing inventory. As vendors change their holdings, we expect the number of included vendors to change.

Varieties increased with the addition of 2 more vendors, better inventories received plus the inclusion of more in the 1987-1989 time frame; those in the 28-29 year age are slowly being added to give some idea of future GG situation. The number of varieties listed, but having no vendors, decreased as more vendors increased their holdings or gave a more correct inventory.

David Prichard, Commercial Sources Chair

Cultivar Preservation/Guardian Gardens

Report for the Year 2016

This year was one of solidifying progress.

The connections that HIPS, and especially its Guardian Gardens program, have been making with botanical institutions overseas led to one of the signal events of the AIS Convention in May: a panel presentation of the Guardian Gardens program, the AIS's National Collections program (presented by Robert Pries), the Presby Memorial Iris Gardens (presented by staff member Suzanne Broullon), the gardens of Průhonice in the Czech Republic (presented by Milan Blažek) and the iris holdings from the Countess von Zeppelin collection at the Meriangärten in Basel, Switzerland (presented by Barbara Wüthrich and Dr. Lisa Eggenschwiler). Seldom in the AIS's history has so much "firepower" shared one stage at one time, probably never has such a gathering been devoted expressly to preservation, and this was only one of the ways that HIPS as a whole turned heads over the course of that convention week in Newark. The repercussions of that convention presence are still bearing fruit for us.

On the rescue front, the Thelma Project – saving hundreds of rare historic irises from the 1950s to the 1980s on a small iris farm in North Carolina – moved into its second successful year under the stewardship of Shaub Dunkley. Simultaneously, as a result of overtures and leadership from Leslie Rule and Susan Flow, respectively, Wanda Rezac welcomed several HIPS members to her Nebraska farm for the first installment of a rescue there of rarities that she has been growing for decades. Both projects will continue into 2017.

Between these rescues (and a third that is taking place as the year ends) and program share-outs, the Guardian Gardens program augmented its inventory of adopted irises to more than two-thousand cultivars. Membership in the program once again more than doubled in 2016, so we have more than fifty participants in this preservation initiative. Phil Edinger and Catherine Adam have been appointed Research Curators of the Guardian Gardens program in North America and France.

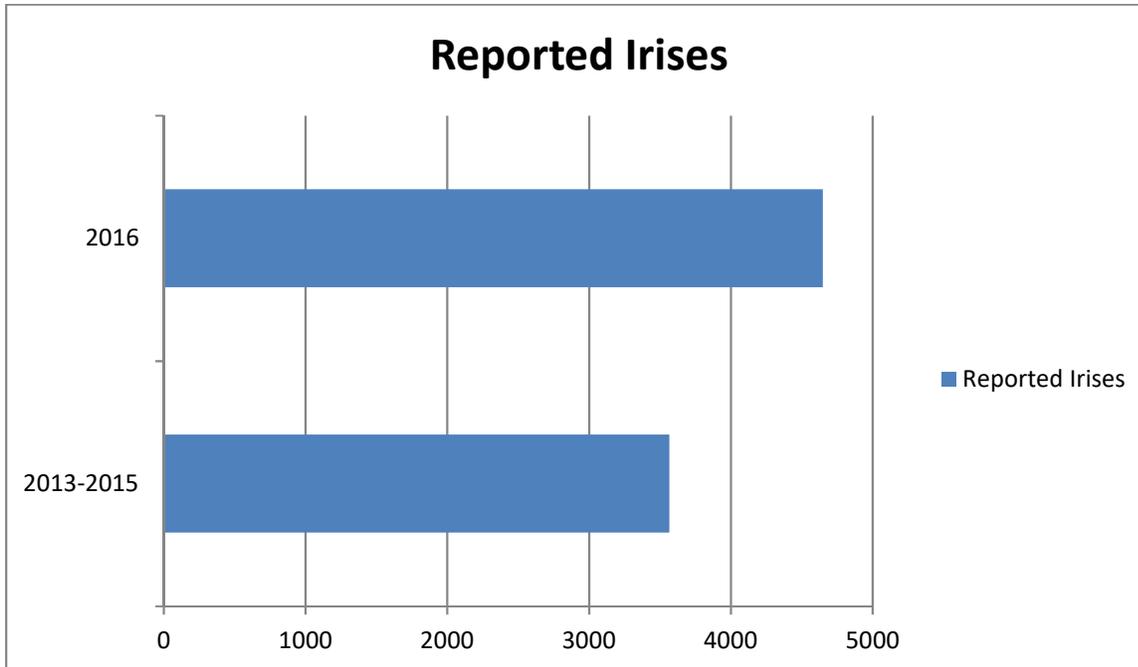
With Cathy Egerer at the helm, another preservation effort was initiated between HIPS and the National Collections of Great Britain, with HIPS filling gaps in the Britons' Dykes collections from donated rhizomes from several of our members' gardens. Soon after that overture had been completed the Meriangärten staff apprised us that the Guardian Gardens and HIPS will be a crucial partner in their strategic planning for the future development of one of Continental Europe's most distinguished public collections. Here at home in North America, the Denver Botanic Gardens has asked to partner with HIPS on future Rezac Rescue efforts.

Outreach to other sections of the AIS last winter have led to donations of dwarf and median bearded irises and aril and arilbred irises to the Guardian Gardens program, with much more to come. The Society for Louisiana Irises and the Greater New Orleans Iris Society, as they develop an island sanctuary for native southern U.S. species and hybrids, have indicated that additional increase in that garden in years to come will be steered into HIPS's care. Preservation has become a focus of the Society for Japanese Irises as well, and that class of irises, especially its rarities, will also be making its way much more into HIPS gardens in coming years.

They say that what is past is prologue. 2016 was a year that HIPS raised its head high to extol that past again. Others are listening.

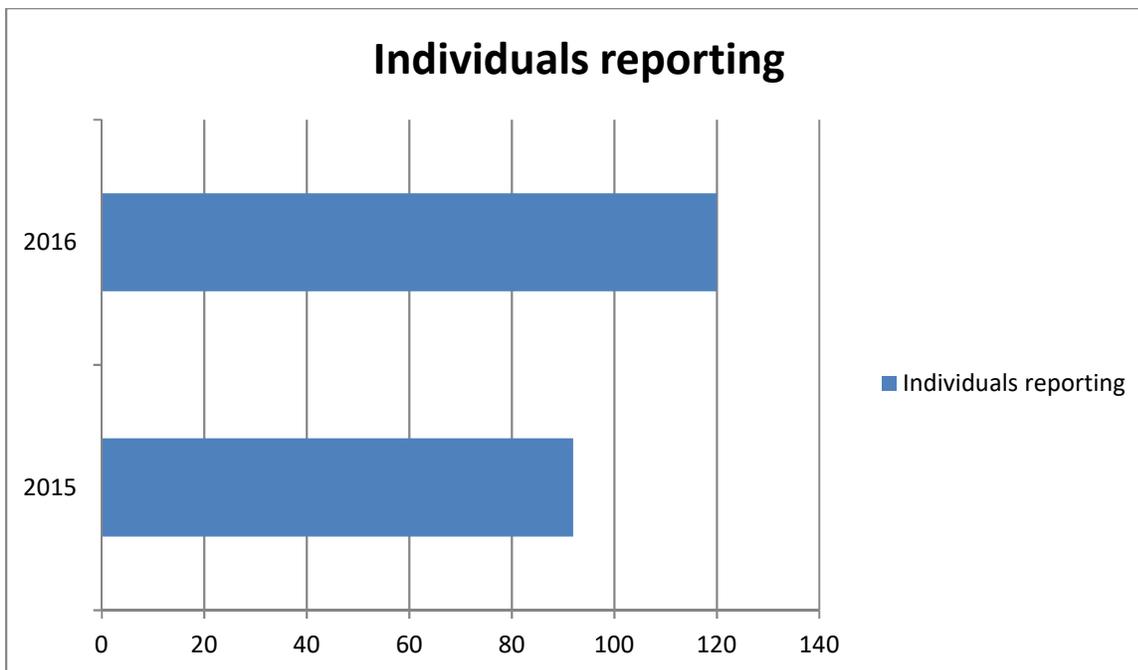
W. Douglass Paschall, Cultivar Preservation Chair

2016 HIPS databank statistics



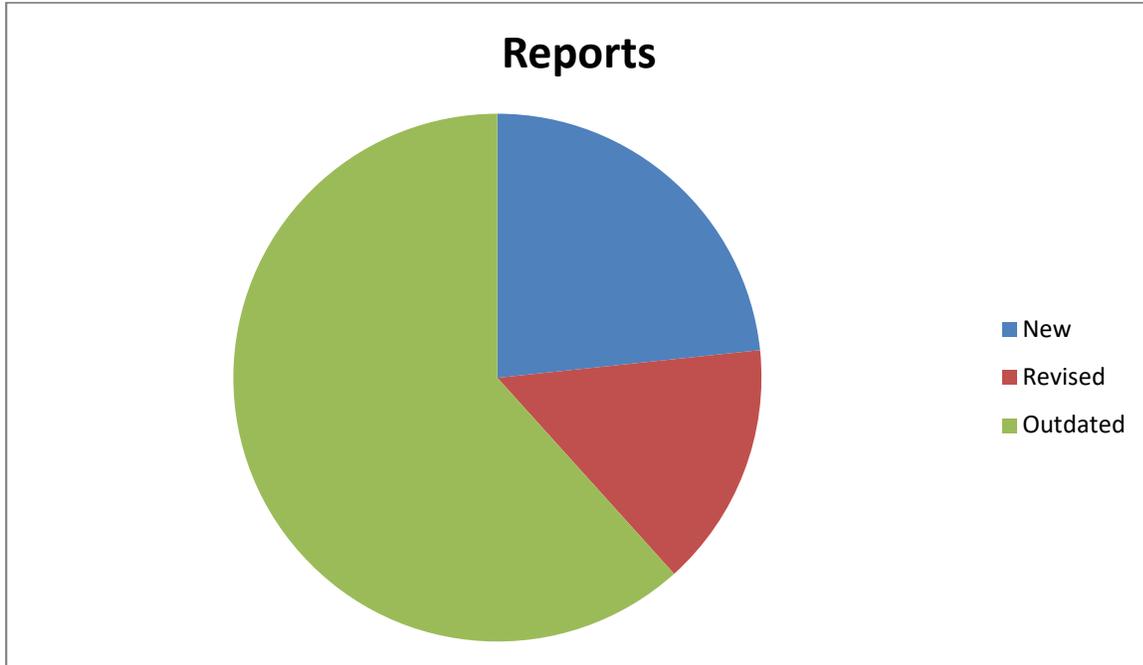
4650 irises (up 30% from 3566 in 2015, in spite of losses)

83 losses (down to 0 growers from 2015)

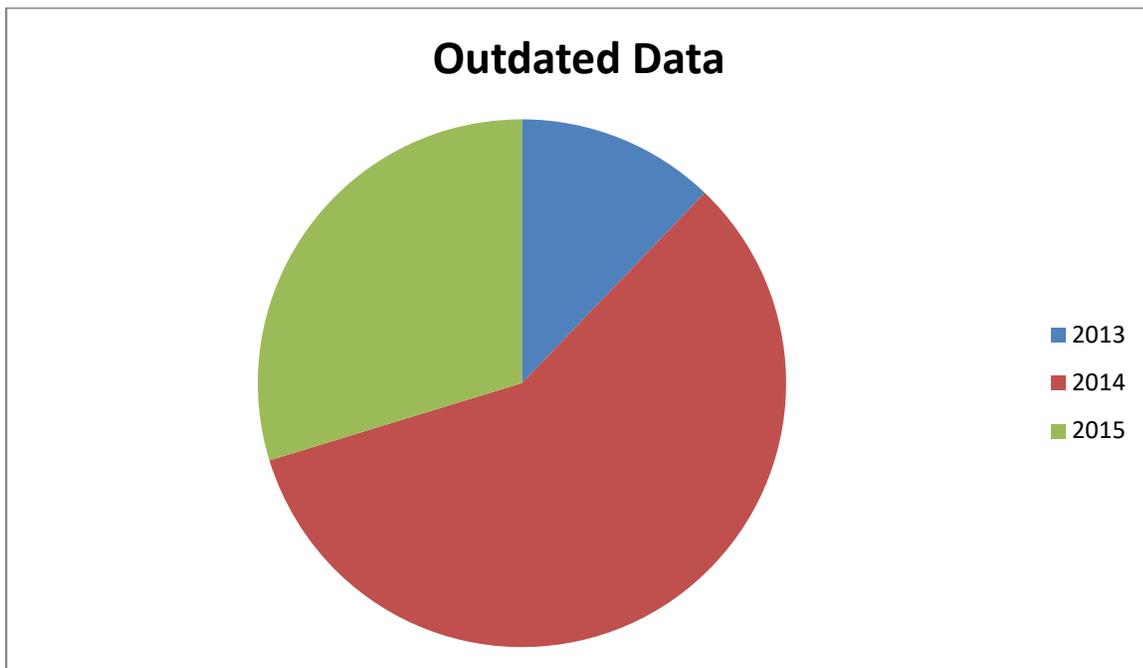


120 total databank lists (up 30% from 92 in 2015)

2016 HIPS databank statistics



28 new reports / 18 revised reports / 74 outdated reports = 120 reports for 2016



9 reports dating 2013 / 43 reports dating 2014 / 22 reports dating 2015 = 74 outdated reports

2017 HIPS DISPLAY GARDEN REPORT

In 2016 the HIPS Display Garden program started with 34 gardens. Three garden owners eagerly volunteered to write reviews of their gardens. Two of these articles appeared in the Spring 2016 edition of ROOTS; another one appeared in the Fall edition.

During the year three more gardens joined the program for a total of 37. In November garden owners were asked if they wished to continue as a HIPS Display Garden in 2017. Of the 37 gardens contacted only 27 responded by the December 31st deadline. With the exception of one, all gardens will remain in the program. Follow up on the remaining 10 will continue in 2017.

One of our HIPS Display Gardens asked for an 'official HIPS Display Garden' certificate to put on display beside a certificate issued to them by the AIS Display Garden committee. Cathy Egerer designed one for them.

Sadly my attempt at creating an on-line presence for the HIPS Display Gardens through PINTEREST and Facebook fell flat on its "face(book)". Only one garden sent pictures. As a result I request that I be removed as a moderator for the HIPS facebook page.

There are still about a half dozen HIPS Display Garden signs available through Judy Eckhoff. Does HIPS want to invest in additional inventory for future years?

Submitted by
Kate Brewitt
HIPS Display Garden Chair
January 22, 2017

HIPS Databank Goals for 2017

Ensure data integrity by updating data originally entered in 2013 and 2014

- Verify membership
- Mini communications campaign
- Data update or removal

Encourage data reporting in 2017 for members whose reports date to 2015

- Communications through e-newsletter/website
- E-mail invitation

Promote yearly data submission

- Regular communications through e-newsletters, website, ROOTS
- Create Word and Excel template tools to accompany PDF tool to facilitate reporting

Collaborate with Commercial List chair (Dave) and Guardian Gardens chair (Douglass)

- Agree upon and implement a common way to list/enter data across the three lists
- Create a checklist with the totals of irises for easier analysis by members using the format 0-0-0 to represent total commercial growers, total member growers, total GG growers

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Thank you,

Paul W. Gossett
HIPS Honoraries & Awards Committee Chairperson

HIPS Membership Chair report for 2016

Submitted by Judy Eckhoff, Membership Chair

As of Jan 31, 2017 HIPS has 761 members. HIPS had 175 people join us last year but we dropped 79 and will be dropping those that expired last August before the next ROOTS is mailed. Cathy has sent a letter reminding them that the renewal date has passed. I mailed renewal cards to 106 members expiring in February, 2017.

The breakdown in membership is: Life 92, dual life 24; Single Annual 254, dual annual 23; Single triennial 297, dual triennial 30; E-Membership 32 and 1 Youth.

HIPS continues to be a leader in the number of members and our membership is holding steady. If you have ideas on keeping our membership growing, let us know.

Judy

North Central Director Report for 2016

The sale of my business took up much of my time this year, but I attended the HIPS board teleconferences and adopted a large number of NOID irises. These have been planted in beds on my property and I'm anticipating their bloom. I also assisted members in my region with questions about growing irises. One member suffered severe losses and we are working to determine some of the causes and how to prevent it in future. I also obtained HIPS membership brochures for distribution in my area. I am looking forward to having more time for gardening this year. Members are welcome to contact me at blubodyandpaint@yahoo.com if I can be of help.

Delane Langton, North Central Regional Director

HIPS Northeast Director's Report for 2016

Most of my activity as Northeastern HIPS Director this past year has been in conjunction with the AIS Convention in Newark, NJ, and the HIPS iris rhizome sale. I was privileged to contribute an article reviewing the Presby Iris Garden for "Irises: the Bulletin of the American Iris Society". When it came time to dig for my local AIS affiliate's sale, I included historic irises among my donations. However, the really big dig came for the HIPS rhizome sale, to which I contributed 225 washed, trimmed, and labeled iris rhizomes.

A co-worker discovered a cache of old glass slides in a Cornell office that was being cleaned out earlier this year. Knowing of my interest in irises, he brought them to me, as most of the slides were of irises and iris gardens. I was able to identify John Wister and several other early AIS luminaries in the pictures. It is my hope that these slides can be reproduced for HIPS, and I am currently looking into that.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Stiefel,

NE HIPS Director

HIPS Public Relations Annual Report for 2016
Submitted by Cathy Egerer, PR Chair

As PR Chair, it's a pleasure to work hand in hand with other HIPS Chairs to help them reach their goals. Here is an overview of PR activities for 2016:

- We reprinted our membership brochures and distributed them to botanical gardens, HIPS members, and all 155 (at the time) local iris clubs. The latter was prompted by a conversation with a HIPS member who said many people in his club weren't familiar with HIPS, and he felt it was the same with other clubs. I reached out to every club president and sent an informational packet with membership brochures to share.
- The HIPS display at the AIS Convention in New Jersey brought in 15 new members. To support the Presby Memorial Iris Gardens, HIPS donated 25 copies of the Spring 2016 ROOTS to sell, with the proceeds going to Presby. This was so successful that we repeated it with the Fall 2016 issue and will try to continue in the future with some of our extra copies.
- HIPS spearheaded an effort to bring Dr. Milan Blazek to Presby for the AIS Convention. Milan is perhaps the foremost iris geneticist in the world and it was an honor and a great pleasure for convention attendees to meet him. Milan was one of the recipients of the HIPS Distinguished Service Award, which was presented to him at the convention. In his words, "To visit the famous Presby Gardens is a lifelong dream come true."
- We arranged to videotape the HIPS program at the convention, and it is now available for viewing online. This was very successful and future presentations may also be recorded for later viewing.
- Nancy McDonald and I gave a demonstration of teleconferencing to interested AIS Board members.
- HIPS partnered with Myddelton House Garden in England to replace their lost British Dykes Medal-winning irises. They are interested in helping us in return and are working with GG program administrator Doug Paschall.
- The number of people following our HIPS Facebook page increased by 90% in 2016 and we now have over 2500 followers. HIPS member Mike Unser posts photos regularly, and we use the page for announcements and items of information. If you use Facebook, be sure to Like us!
- We ramped into high gear to promote the HIPS Rhizome Sale. Facebook was a great platform, and several volunteers promoted the sale on pages they manage or follow. I worked with Wayne Messer to place notices in the AIS electronic newsletter, *News & Notes*, and several folks posted notices on other garden sites. An e-mail went out to all HIPS members reminding them of the sale dates and directing them to the HIPS website for information and instructions. It worked – this year's sale was a record-breaker!
- I finished up the year by consolidating all the online e-mail addresses with those in our membership records, in preparation for starting an e-mail newsletter. The first newsletter went out in January, 2017 to 597 HIPS members. Plans are to send a newsletter at least once a month, and hopefully this will increase our member retention rate.

Members who would like membership brochures to pass out, please contact me at pr@historiciris.org. Your suggestions are always welcome!

HIPS Publications Chair report for 2016

I accepted the appointment of HIPS Publications Chair in March 2016. I sent an introductory email to Susan Boyce and arrangements were made by her to ship the storefront items within a reasonable amount of time.

In late June, approximately 12 boxes were received, unpacked, counted and arranged in filing cabinets and overflow boxes. An electronic spreadsheet was built to track the availability and sale of each item as well as a system of hand-written ledgers as backup documents. When the inventory of the items was completed, a copy of it was sent to the President and BOD for review. In this initial report, any known missing items and items with few copies were highlighted.

I contacted our webmaster in early summer and was given access to the storefront as an Administrator. Several pending orders were pulled from the inventory and prepared for shipment.

While filling these pending orders, I discovered that there were two items that required reprinting: *GARDEN IRISES* and *POGONIRIS*. Another item, *COMPREHENSIVE CHECKLIST FOR ARIL AND ARILBRED IRIS*, was completely sold out and there was no Master Copy.

There was a Master Copy for *GARDEN IRISES* so 5 additional copies were easily made. However, the *POGONIRIS* document was a stapled booklet and after obtaining an estimate it was clear that reprinting it would require a considerable expenditure.

After discussion with BOD members it was learned that the *CHECKLIST* had only been authorized for 50 copies per Sharon McAllister on whose research it was based. Bob Pries, via Dorothy Stiefel's request, has attempted to contact Sharon for permission to reprint more copies but so far, we have not heard back from her.

As a result of the discussion, the *POGONIRIS* booklet was replenished with 50 copies. (The printer provided us with both a Master Copy and a flash drive of the document.) And the *CHECKLIST* was removed from the store front offerings.

Early this fall HIPS obtained 50 *Bliss Irises* books signed by the author, Anne Milner. Anne donated one book to our organization and it has been set aside for the archives. 41 copies of the book were sold and shipped.

In early October, I learned that HIPS wanted to have themed gifts in the HIPS shop for a Holiday shopping Mart. Several items were found, purchased and listed on the store front. 25 additional *Bliss* books were ordered. The rest of the offerings consisted of a flash drive of all copies of *ROOTS*, a refrigerator magnet and Iris note cards. As of today, we have had only 2 purchases. Perhaps, in the future, we can investigate additional ways to advertise the availability of these items.

Because of the learning curve related to the responsibilities of this position, I have started a Book of Business that details step by step guidance on what is required and how to do it. It is a work in progress and as I understand more about the expectations I will add additional instructions. Also there is more specific detail that needs to be added but at least it is a start.

Not related to this position, but related to the HIPS mission, I organized and managed the 2016 Rezac rescue. This has been extensively written up in ROOTS. However, recently I did learn that my networking through the Mountains and Plains Iris Society (MPIS) group in Denver has netted HIPS a treasured opportunity.

In May, the Denver MPIS group was invited to view the Lankow display garden at the Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG). That day, I approached Angela Jewett, one of the horticulturists overseeing this project and told her about what we were doing in Nebraska. I began to include her in the correspondence for the Rezac rescue. The DBG was intrigued and eager to learn about irises since they had no specific background on individual cultivars.

Recently I received an email from Angela; the DBG had requested and received a grant to assist and acquire Rezac irises this year. They are going to partner with us! Doug is in touch with Angela and he will move this partnership forward. I will concentrate on the 2017 Rezac rescue.

Lastly, I supported the HIPS rhizome sale shipping 3 large boxes.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan A Flow
Publication Chair

HIPS Board of Directors Editor's End-of-Year Report for 2016

In 2016, I gathered and edited articles, selected photographs, and did layout for two 44-page issues of *ROOTS*. We heard from many voices, with articles or columns by at least ten different people in each. Topics ranged from iris and gardening education through activity reports and thoughtful gardening philosophies. My editorial goal is to have a wide range of pieces in each issue, so iris gardeners at all levels of experience can find something to enjoy and learn from.

Our new printer, Sundance Press, did a much improved job of photo reproduction. Of course this can never be perfect unless the printer has an open bloom of the flower to compare the color with, but that limitation recognized, Sundance is doing a fine job for us. Gene Mandish, our customer service representative there, is so easy to work with and full of good ideas to help improve production and keep costs down.

I thank Phil Edinger, as always, for vetting the iris photos, and Janet Smith for working her photo magic on them to prepare them for press. I also thank all of our text and photo contributors, who give so much of their time to make *ROOTS* an interesting and informative read.

Looking forward, I am excited by the possibilities embodied in the new HIPS email newsletter. That newsletter will allow us to save our glossy color bulletin for illustrated articles and columns. Pieces that require no illustration are better presented in the email newsletter—always with the option for a plain black-and-white newsletter sent via postal mail to members who do not use computers. Our annual vendor list, annual Treasurer's report, and HIPS Board of Directors meeting minutes are examples of pieces that needlessly occupy many pages of our full-color *ROOTS*. Moving these to the newsletter will allow me to drop the size of *ROOTS* back to the more usual 36 pages without giving up illustrated content.

I look forward to continued exciting content for *ROOTS*, as HIPS becomes ever more active in rescuing and preserving historic irises. Enthusiasm is contagious, and the more successful efforts we report in *ROOTS*, the more members will be inspired to participate.

Nancy McDonald, Editor

Slide Preservation Report for 2016

I finished scanning all HIPS slide archives that were available at the time. I had to pause for a few months due to wildfires close by my home. In December I got back to work scanning the Glen Corlew slides, of which there are 7000 of them. The HIPS slide collection yielded several dozen new photos for the AIS Wiki for irises that did not have a photo entered. There are several boxes of HIPS slides still to be scanned once they are received from the previous Archives Chair. If you know of a slide collection that needs preservation, please contact me at gby456@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Smith

HIPS ANNUAL DIRECTOR REPORT 2016

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Another year as a HIPS BOD member has passed and it's been a good one. The new format of the Rhizome Sale was VERY successful, bringing in record income for HIPS and even some new members. With a few tweaks, I hope it will continue to be as profitable!

I have continued promoting historic irises in my area, on Facebook, etc. I have added many new varieties to my personal garden and am getting them on the website for sale/distribution as quickly as they increase. Getting cultivars into many gardens is the best way to ensure their survival for years to come!

I've had a few inquiries this year regarding historic irises, some general, some about specific varieties, and have educated those people about the irises and the existence of HIPS. Response has been very positive.

I look forward to another year as Sale Chairman and helping HIPS continue in their mission to promote and preserve more historic irises.

Judy Schneider

Southeast Region Board Director: 2016 Year End Report
(Areas included in the region are indicated at the end of the report)

2016 was another year of great energy and progress for HIPS. I enjoyed the opportunity to participate in it.

I participated in all teleconference meeting of the Board and in discussions held on the board's listserve. Currently I serve as a member of the Board's Budget Committee and the Bylaws and Policies Committee. I also participate in the HIPS website Member Forum. The forum is an excellent resource for communicating with the full general membership. It's a super way for all of us to chat, exchange ideas and strengthen our community. See you there!

Our Public Relations chair, Cathy Egerer, who is also our President, is leading the charge on an effort to promote email newsletters to the members. She is working with the Directors to help us use this vehicle to inform our regional members of news and activities. So that is something I want to start doing in the future. Please feel welcome and encouraged to send me whatever news you think the other members would benefit from hearing about. It's a place I can pass on the activities and events you'd like the other member to know about or join in. We need the active email address of any member who wants to receive the newsletters so send us that if you haven't already.

The volume of communication to me from regional members was light. I'd love to hear from more members who have general inquiries I might assist you with or who have ideas and feedback for me, our program coordinators or the HIPS leadership. Sometimes our members have to scale back their collections or make arrangements to see that they are passed on to the future. You might know of situations where an iris rescue type effort seems needed. I can facilitate you in getting advice and assistance that HIPS offers to help people with that.

The 2016 HIPS annual rhizome sale was a phenomenal success and we all can warmly thank the people who worked so very hard to make it happen. The proceeds are a very major part of generating funds to sustain and grow the organization. At the roots of making the sale successful are the donations of rhizomes from our members. Big boxes or little boxes, we take joy in seeing them all. I can tell you that packing up a box of rhizomes to send in is one the most gratifying things I do yearly. Sharing our beloved historic irises is at the very heart of our main mission, keeping them growing and going forever!

I continue to look for reports on and evidence of bearded irises that grow well in the hotter and more humid sections of the Southeast. I've gathered a few reports of people successfully growing some in sections of Zone 8 and 9 where conventional wisdom says they should not do well. Help us bust the myth! South Central Director Judy Schneider is partnering with me since her region includes Texas and Louisiana. HIPS is pushing to be more inclusive of the preservation of species and beardless irises so members are encouraged to send me reports about those as well.

I also continue to coordinate a field project which we call the 'Thelma's Irises Project. The focus of the project is to facilitate dispersal of endangered irises from a family's large collection located in Winston-Salem, NC. The project has been active since 2015. We've dispersed a good number of the irises but many more remain. The project would benefit from other members partnering with me to keep the program as successful as possible. Those interested in this or just interested to learn more about the project in general are encouraged to contact me.

I thank people for continuing their membership and whatever ways you help make the HIPS active and successful. As always, I look forward to serving you in the future.

Respectfully submitted;
Shaub Dunkley

91 Boones Farm Rd, Candler, NC 28715
SEdirector@historicism.org
(828) 670-0071

The Southeast Region is comprised of Maryland, Virginia, District of Columbia, West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands

Southwest Regional Director's Report for 2016
Submitted by Linda Baumgartner

Activities included:

Maintaining the Elmohr Iris Society's HIPS bed at the Loomis Test Garden in Colorado Springs.

Attended the Spring meeting of the Mountains and Plains Iris Society in Denver. I am a member there too. I gave a little intro to the members there about HIPS and passed out HIPS brochures. Also met Susan Flow in person.

Chairman of the Elmohr Iris Society's AIS flower show the first Sat. of June. Passed out HIPS brochures and talked to the public about historic irises. We had many historic entries, in both adult and youth categories.

Did my final apprentice judging at the Mountains and Plains AIS flower show in Denver at the Denver Botanic Garden later in June. Many historic entries. Saw some blooms that I have only read about in books.

Attended a special viewing of the Lankow Iris Collection at Chatfield campus of the Denver Botanic Gardens in May. This was a special invitation to a preview of the collection issued to local Iris Societies. The gardeners there asked us all to help correctly identify some of the cultivars. Not completely in bloom at that time, but we did find some that were mis-identified. I saw 'Rose Unique', another bloom I had never seen.

Last week end in July brings the Elmohr Iris Society's annual sale. We put out all the rhizomes in boxes, with pictures and a write up of each. We marked all the historic with a bright yellow stick in each box for instant identification. A great idea of 2 of our members were historic grab bags. We sold a number of labeled historic rhizomes in a bag at a discount. This was very popular. Of course, HIPS brochures were available, and we talked to many customers about the oldies.

We rescued some leftover historic from the Mountains and Plains Iris sale. Got 'New Snow', 'Brown Lasso', and 'Snow Carnival', among others.

Speaking of rescues, we did two here in the Springs this summer. The Mom of a soldier who is deployed asked us to move the irises from an Iris bed at a house the soldier and his wife had purchased. They wanted to claim more of the yard for recreation. We dug many irises from a huge raised bed. We planted many of the rescues at the Loomis test garden. I found 'Baby Blue' from 1931 for my GG collection and our HIPS bed, as well as some Schreiners Dykes winners we did not have.

Second rescue was from a charter member of the Elmohr Iris Society, which was founded in 1966. She remembers Dr. Loomis. At the age of 93, her daughters thought she should move to Denver to be closer to family. We helped to dig what she wanted to

take with her. She talked the Assisted Living folks into letting her grow a few irises outside of her apartment. This spring will be her 50th year as an iris collector. We dug over 50 rhizomes to plant in a bed at the Loomis Test Garden. It will be called the Lola Quinn bed. She had some historic which will be planted in the HIPS bed, and some rare historic for my GG collection. Lola also did some hybridizing. I notice that although 'Lola's Delight' is listed in the wiki Iris Encyclopedia, there is no picture, so there is another project!

A lot of information and enhancements were added to our website this year.

Photo Gallery

My main focus was to add vetting symbols to every existing photo in our gallery. Provenance where noted was also added, and it is my goal to get more provenance added, so as time goes on, we know where verified cultivars can be, or were located at one time.

In addition I was able to add 500 new gallery listings to the gallery which consisted of:

- HIPS Slide Archival Photos
- Donated photos –from Mike Unser’s days as webmaster which he did not get a chance to enter
- Newly submitted photos from our members.

In addition I was able to add about 200 additional photos to existing gallery entries where we had a few or of poor quality. Catalog images were also added when available (and marked as such) as a good reference to actual photographs.

I still have many photos that will be added over time; this is a long term project, and I am still interested in acquiring new photos as well. My objective is not to fill the gallery with a large quantity of photos per cultivar, but to add quality photos and photos of iris which are not readily available. We do not want 10+ photos of the same iris. I have already removed and replaced some of the poor quality photos in our gallery. We also are enlarging the size of the new photos in our gallery so they are not the small 375x375 images that were inherited from Mike Unser’s Website, our new photos when available are approximately 2x as big). Our objective is not to compete or replicate the AIS Photo Gallery, but to offer a different experience.

We also resurrected Mike’s practice of adding a group of new historic on New Years, as a representative sample of the graduating class. These photos of 1987 can be retrieved as a set thru the advanced features, but they will be merged with the decade set of 80’s iris in a short time.

Composite ID Pictures

Our composite pictures project, which consisted of a collage of photos by one photographer of each iris, to be used as an identification tool is almost at the launching point. These collages can be linked to when available from the Gallery pages, and also on a standalone page. Explaining the Composite ID project and asking for volunteers. It will be a long term project which we hope will attract photographers to contribute to these ID composites.

In addition the website has been enhanced with the following this past year:

- A GG forum for the exclusive use of GG participants
- Updated HIPS store, where new items as well as literature is available. The problem of international shipping has been solved with the request to email the shopkeeper for a shipping price via a carrier of choice, rather than a standard set fee.
- Posterity Planning page with documents to use for wills and bequests when one is no longer able to maintain their iris collection
- AIS Color Chart post 1950 is now available as a feature on the front page
- A new main menu section called ‘Library’ is a quick and easy way to reference our literature and videos. Our first video is a link to the HIPS AIS convention presentation in May.
- Enhanced ‘Iris for Beginners’ has been set up as a feature by Cathy for those who are new to the world of iris.
- We are able to provide two ‘broadcast’ Message areas on the site which can be changed easily. The first is on the main page where we want to let the public and HIPS members know certain events such as Rhizome Sales or Christmas Shop Sales. The Rhizome Sale announcement was extremely successful, resulting in a very large turnout for rhizome buyers. A second message area has been set up in the forum section where Notices for Members Only can be posted and changed.
- Help Wanted section has been posted to fill open positions and also attract volunteers
- Minutes of Meetings are all being posted under Society Business so that the public and HIPS members is aware of what HIPS has been doing.

Jack Finney who is an experienced irisarian has volunteered his services to work on the website with me. Jack is interested in our NOID gallery, which sadly has been neglected due to the immense amount of work that had to be done in other sections. The goal is to have NOIDS of interest posted. First of all, NOIDS are beautiful and we want to enjoy each others NOIDS. Secondly more exposure may lead to some identification of these NOIDS.

Communications The webmaster has fielded approximately 50-100 emails from the public this year. Notes ranged from just comments on the site, suggestions for the site, requests for identification or finding a specific iris, questions about the rhizome sale, and the vast majority were questions on how to sign up or how to access the member section. The Webmaster responds to every request, and refers some to specific areas that can help the inquiry more effectively. We have not received any negative or inappropriate emails. My objective is to respond to each request even if we cannot help the emailer.

Successes Many people are finding the advanced search and comparison features of value. The notices on the Home page are effective, and the forums are slowly gaining more popularity.

Wish List Other items that we want to implement in 2017 are the following:

- Clean up of the Membership area. Currently Membership and Users are unique databases on the website although they are not visible to the public. They work together updating each other, but need to be cleaned up to reflect the true population of HIPS members since only approximately half of our members are registered on the website.
- More information on identification, such as composite pictures, possibly videos, and identification aides are planned.
- Some kind of page of the Rebert Project where many of the Rebert photos can be displayed encouraging help from HIPS members and the public on identification.
- A Donate button will be added for those who would like to give a charitable donation to HIPS.
- A Locator service page is in the talk stage, where a member is looking for an iris, but is not available either from the Commercial Sources or is in the Databank. This would be similar to the Locator feature in ROOTS, or the AIS website.

Technical Wish List

- Since the website has become a focal point in learning about, researching, and becoming involved in the historic iris community, it would be useful to expand our memory and storage space (these two come as a package deal), which we could do incrementally. I suggest the additional 10-15.00 per month level. This should eliminate the occasional website stoppages (which you may not have noticed) but sometimes we do not have access for about one minute because of heavy usage. It should also increase speed, as our gallery search and fetch is not very fast.
- "Possibly" a better forum where we will again have the ability to post private messages to the posters. This has been mentioned to me several times but our current Forum is a 'bare bones' variety which does not offer this. However finding something else, whether it be a plugin or whatever, is in the back of my thoughts.

If I forgot something, or you have suggestions for expansion, please do not hesitate to contact me. Development is slow on our site due to our lack of expertise and resources, but I love feedback and will keep all suggestions in mind for future planning.

Laetitia Munro