

Commercial Vendors Annual Report:

The list continues to grow; it is now up to 6178 varieties but somewhat over 1200 have no sellers any longer. Being in this situation means there had been sellers within the last 5 or so years, so it is possible these missing ones are still to be found somewhere. There are now 47 vendors in the list, with some losses and some gains this year. Several vendors do not submit their list; those with easy to access and use internet catalogs can be used to update their lists, but several large, and some smaller, sellers have not submitted anything for at least 3 years so their data is getting stale. Despite this there are 37 with current data included.

There are requests for information from iris growers several times a year, the latest being 1 March 2018, as sellers of specific historic varieties are sought.

David Prichard

CULTIVAR PRESERVATION

Annual Report for 2017

Some years ago HIPS members noted that the number of sellers of historic irises was declining and that the most uncommon irises would disappear from commerce altogether, with the likelihood that most, being no longer available in the marketplace, would go extinct in just a few years after that. That danger persists today. The past year, 2017, was devoted most assiduously to curbing such preventable losses. If the sellers needed to retire, and many have been in this business for decades, the irises could still be saved.

The year started with a bang, in the dead of winter, as the owners of Blue J Iris let us know that the business would be reduced in scale as it passed to a daughter in Texas. An order was placed on behalf of some two-dozen gardeners to acquire the irises that would disappear, the more than two-hundred varieties, in more than one-thousand rhizomes, for which Blue J was in many cases already the only source.

As summer came, two projects of a similar nature, initiated in 2015 and 2016, continued. The holdings of Thelma Boose were again targeted for her extraordinary collection of 1950s-1970s vintage irises on the verge of leaving us. And Wanda Rezac requested that the ongoing acquisitions of her massive inventory be accelerated into a single season.

As those efforts were underway, the National Collections program of the American Iris Society had initiated contact with Don and Ginny Spoon, to request that a comparable acquisition incentive be undertaken for their iris collection, possibly the largest in the world. In this first year the focus was on the dwarf bearded irises and the arilbreds (ex collection Dick Sparling) that they held, giving those classes greater representation in the Guardian Gardens program and HIPS gardens. Particular efforts were made in this instance to place appropriate irises in HIPS display gardens and to cement relationships between HIPS and the Aril Society International.

To these massive “rescues” should be added the many smaller ones that individual HIPS members, reading of these efforts in *ROOTS*, are undertaking in their own neighborhoods across North America and beyond to save treasures that otherwise could be lost.

International acquisitions proceed apace. Richard Cayeux once again made rare irises by his family available to HIPS members, gracing us with some of France’s greatest productions. Additional treasures were brought over from Pruhonice’s extraordinary collection, one of the largest in Europe. Another pipeline of rarities has developed out of HIPS’s restoration of British irises to their country of origin; this year saw reciprocation with a collection of Cedric Morris irises and other goodies from Sissinghurst and other prominent collections in the United Kingdom coming westward across the Pond.

All of these efforts have been made possible because of the dedication of some very avid and conscientious HIPS members, and special note should be made of the energies and acumen of Susan Flow, Shaub Dunkley, Laetitia Munro, Catherine Adam, Charlie Carver, and Cathy Egerer in seeing HIPS’s mission fulfilled in such impressive measure.

The Guardian Gardens program, which initiated several of these exchanges and rescues, received wider attention when its efforts were publicized in Scott Kunst's Old House Gardens newsletter and on the very popular website *Gardenista*, with pleas to bring such efforts to other plant genera as well. The inquiries coming from this exposure have numbered several hundred, bringing more people (and importantly, more *young* people) into the GG program, into HIPS, and into iris gardening as a whole. Guardian Gardens once again has more than doubled its roll of participants, and at year end stood at more than one-hundred and fifty members. It is still growing at this writing.

W. Douglass Paschall
Cultivar Preservation Chair

2018 HIPS DISPLAY GARDEN REPORT

In 2017 the HIPS Display Garden program started with 37 gardens. During the year one additional garden joined giving HIPS a total of 38 display gardens which are spread throughout 23 states, two Canadian provinces and England.

During the 2018 renewal process two gardens withdrew from the program, The Hillcrest Hall collection in Arkansas and Kanabec History Center in Minnesota which had been a HIPS Display Garden for over 10 years. But as two leave, two more join. Eagle Ridge Iris Garden in Montana joined in February, the first garden in Montana. The Gamble Garden in California has signed up as a new member in order to become a display garden.

With our supply of HIPS Display Garden signs dwindling, it was time to design a new one. Cathy Egerer was instrumental in this effort by finding a sign maker in Texas, putting together designs for me to review and placing the order. It was decided that Display Gardens would be given one sign at no cost. Additional signs will be available for \$15 which includes shipping. Signs picked up at conventions or other events will be \$10. The Display Garden owners have expressed keen interest in the new sign with many liking the fact that the word 'HIPS' displayed on the previous sign was expanded to read 'Historic Iris Preservation Society'.

Cathy would like to see HIPS with 50 display gardens by the end of the 2018 iris season, certainly an attainable goal.

Submitted by
Kate Brewitt
HIPS Display Garden Chair
March 3, 2018

HIPS Public Relations Annual Report for 2017
Submitted by Cathy Egerer, PR Chair

HIPS had a busy year and continues to grow. Public relations highlights for the year:

AIS Convention, Des Moines, IA

- The AIS convention in Des Moines was well-attended and HIPS stocked their information table with past issues of ROOTS, membership brochures, and informational flyers on the Guardian Gardens program. All the copies of ROOTS and most of the other brochures were taken by conference attendees.
- We also showcased a list of 100+ irises that had disappeared of the Member Databank list in 2016, and asked attendees to let us know if they had any of the irises. Five irises were located.
- Several canvas photos of irises were donated to the AIS silent auction on behalf of HIPS.
- I presented a program on hybridizer Agnes Whiting during the Saturday symposium at the convention. The presentation focused on her life and work, including information on HIPS and our efforts to preserve rare irises through our Guardian Gardens program.

Member Outreach

- In January, the first HIPS e-newsletter was sent to members who have an e-mail on file with us. Subsequent issues followed approximately every month. The e-newsletter contained information on iris events, HIPS news, requests for missing irises, and other iris-related news. As of December, 2017, we have 680 members receiving the email newsletter, or approximately 80% of our members.
- We continued to offer HIPS brochures to members who requested them. They were used at HIPS display gardens, garden shows, local iris club events, and iris sales.
- We reprinted the HIPS brochures in the fall of 2017, and printed 500 copies of our Guardian Gardens FAQ to have available.

Public Outreach

- HIPS and the Guardian Gardens program were featured in several prominent online publications in 2017. The popular garden blog *Gardenista* did an in-depth interview with Doug Paschall. Old House Gardens ran an article in their e-newsletter. Both publications reach an audience of several thousand gardeners. This resulted in a large uptick in requests for information on how to join the GG program.
- HIPS worked with a number of gardens in 2017 to increase their holdings of historic irises. Schreiners Gardens announced plans to expand their new historic iris bed, and HIPS members helped replace some lost irises. The Iris Society of Minnesota planted the new Northeast Minneapolis Municipal Iris Garden at Columbia Park, and HIPS helped by sending historic irises to plant. The Brookby Estate in Grand Rapids, Michigan is restoring a historic garden from the 1920s, and HIPS sent irises. Plans are underway to assist gardens in Oregon and Virginia in 2018.

Details of our PR projects are included in ROOTS in the HIPS Outreach column.

HIPS Slide Preservation Report for 2017

I continued to receive slide collections in 2017, and I am currently scanning the Larry Harder collection and more from Barry Blyth. We received a sizable slide donation from a HIPS member in Michigan at the end of the year. According to AIS Librarian Dave Silverberg, 1400 photos have been provided to the Iris Wiki to fill empty spots. I have 5,000 - 6,000 more slides to scan at this point. HIPS members with slides to donate should contact me at gby456@gmail.com.

Janet Smith
Slide Preservation Chair

Honoraries & Awards Report 2017

The Honoraries and Awards Committee awarded two 2017 HIPS Distinguished Service Awards. One was awarded to Mr. Gary White for his dedication and service to HIPS as HIPS President. The second award was to Mr. Douglas Paschall for his service to HIPS and for helping to bring about the Guardian Gardens Program and for being the Guardian Gardens Administrator. Both awards were presented to each of them in Des Moines, IA at the HIPS General Membership Meeting/Program at the 2017 AIS Convention.

Thank you,

Paul W. Gossett
HIPS Honoraries and Awards Committee Chair

ID Chair Committee Annual Report 2017

I believe I was present at all but one of our teleconferences.

Putting on my National Collections hat for a moment I joined forces with Doug Paschall and GG this past June & July to rescue a collection of MDB & MTB at Winterberry Gardens. Cultivars from that venture were distributed mainly to 4 National Collections but also to GG. Thanks to Nancy McDonald and Judy Schneider for hosting MTB cultivars. Judy may well have the largest collection of MTB (modern and historic) anywhere. The largest known collection of MDB is now here on Orcas Island and Will Plotner is curating a growing collection of mostly modern MDB. Doug and I also visited the James Madison Estate at Montpelier and consulted on period iris (and other genera) for two period gardens being planned there. I shipped 30-40 varieties from my collection to Montpelier.

I contributed a couple hundred rhizomes to the HIPS Sale and filled a request from GG.

I gave a talk on the history of Iris Preservation to King County Iris Society (Seattle in April) and opened my garden for an annual Iris Social in May.

The ID committee received a number of requests for ID, almost entirely TB and one beardless species (foetidissima). As one would expect, ID is intermittent and until DNA testing is readily available and affordable, identification will likely be no more certain than "appears to be so and so".

I am preparing a new format with introduction and criteria for ID requests and considering how to most easily activate ID committee to respond to ID requests. Hope to finish this by the end of March, 2018.

I have established correspondence with Alan McMurtie of Canada re: the acquisition, promotion and preservation of his reticulata introductions. (Trying to get Dwarf Iris Society to feature his work). Continue to encourage Iris Societies to add preservation to their mission statements.

I have become the recipient of a collection (from Maine) of Siberian varieties that was intended to form the foundation of a National Collection of Siberians. I have begun a survey of the Siberian class and will soon begin one for SDB. Will continue with MTB & MDB surveys. Next fall Arils and AB survey. These surveys and the collections that are assembled using survey data will create collections where, aside from the goal of preservation, we will have opportunity to vet and photo document iris cultivars to assist with future ID.

I also assembled representative samples of plant markers from numerous commercial sources and wrote an article reviewing their merits, to be published in two parts in ROOTS, Spring and Fall issues. Wrote an article about the rescue at Winterberry.

I plan to approach HIPS for the acquisition of scuba gear to facilitate safe swimming in this sea of iris.

Charlie Carver

HIPS Membership Report for 2017

Membership numbers are still good, HIPS currently has 808 total members, with the majority being single triannual memberships. Unfortunately there are 107 members whose membership expired Aug. 31, 2017 and will be deleted if they do not renew. Laetitia Munro, the HIPS webmaster, is working on ways to make membership information easier for members to understand and easier for them to join or renew their memberships online.

Cathy Egerer has started sending renewal reminders via email and I'll continue to send cards to those without email and to those whose email addresses bounce. A new member package is still being sent to new members. The package contains a recent bulletin, a letter from the president and information about the Guardian Garden Program.

Membership brochures and other HIPS information flyers are available to any member who would like to share them. Contact Cathy Egerer at pr@historiciris.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Eckhoff, Membership Chair

North Central Region Director Report for 2017

2017 was the first year of my retirement after the sale of my body shop business. Loved having the extra time in our garden where we were able to promote historic iris to our local club and garden visitors. This was also the first year we were able to dig and donate iris for the HIPS sale. We made the 350 mile trip to Missoula, Montana for their iris show, met the wonderful members and even went on a tour of their gardens in bloom. We also post iris photos daily to the various iris Facebook pages and the HIPS page when the oldies are blooming. We exchanged desired iris with Robert Karr, Charlie Carver and adopted a batch of the Thelma Sale iris as well. That pretty much sums up 2017. We look forward to the National convention in New Orleans and also the Region 13 Spring Meeting and, of course, this year's bloom cannot come soon enough.

Respectfully submitted,

Delane H. Langton
Eagle Ridge Iris Gardens
1008 Eagle Ridge Drive
Lockwood, Montana 59101
(406) 698-3567

HIPS NORTHEAST DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2017

I was fortunate to attend the AIS National Convention in Des Moines in 2017, and participated in the HIPS activities there. My other activities included inventorying my own collection and submitting an annual list of cultivars I grow to the HIPS Membership Historic Holdings Database. I harvested and donated approximately 160 rhizomes of 50 varieties to the annual HIPS sale. I also contributed a goodly number of historic to my own affiliate's rhizome sale.

In late fall another Region 2 irisarian and I journeyed to the remnants of a deceased member's garden to inventory what had survived there. Unfortunately, the garden had been neglected after the irisarian's death, which had occurred 2 years earlier. Adding to that misfortune was the fact that the area had suffered a severe drought the previous season, and was also located in an area of extremely sandy soil. The drought was severe enough that farmers in the area were eligible for federal government assistance due to crop losses. Since the irises in the garden had been primarily beardless irises, there was little left to inventory. To complete the damage, markers were gone or mostly illegible, and it was impossible to verify the few straggly plants left. In short, it was an excellent illustration of how quickly iris gardens can vanish when they are no longer tended.

This was my final year as NE HIPS Director and I am glad to have served, but welcome "new blood" to the position, and offer to assist in any way I can.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Stiefel

Northwest Director Report 2017

I contacted all HIPS members in my region and RVP's best I could. I received names and passed on of who wished to be on the rescue list. Not much else has happened nor correspondence received thus far.

Janet Smith

2017 ANNUAL REPORT: PUBLICATION SALES CHAIR

In overview, the HIPS shop had a busier year than 2016. We did not need to spend any funds to replenish any of our publications or purchase new items for our storefront. Overall, with my short tenure of experience, I would characterize our sales in 2017 as modest.

In 2017, I received and shipped 18 orders for products from the HIPS storefront. This reflected an increase from the total of 10 orders that I received and processed in 2016. Highlights for this year related to our sales are listed below:

- I received two orders from outside the USA. The order from the UK wanted a copy of the Wallace Catalogue and the order from Canada wanted a back copy of ROOTS. Both customers inquired about shipping charges which proved to be exorbitant. I ended up scanning the Wallace Catalogue and sending it as an email attachment and with help from Cathy I obtained an electronic copy of ROOTS and sent it instead of mailing a copy. SUGGESTION/ OBSERVATION: at some point in the future, HIPS may want to consider converting some of these historic publications as well as offer electronic copies of ROOTS for individual purchase especially for our international members seeking back copies of his publication.
- One customer requested a copy of one of the "Iris Chronicles". Our HIPS collection consists of copies of very old and poorly copied mimeographs. I could hardly read the publication and I had to make a copy of it. No complaint from the customer, but I felt really awful sending it out. SUGGESTION/OBSERVATION: HIPS may want to explore how to retype and digitalize these amazing reservoirs of information. It would be a big job, but they could become much more accessible to the membership.
- I received 5 requests for copies of AIS bulletins this year. In 2016 only 1 request had been received.
- The storefront now only has 9 more copies of: "Descriptions of Historic Aril and Arilbred Cultivars" written by Sharon McAllister. Although several communications were sent, we did not receive a reply and therefore have not received permission to make additional copies of this publication. As of today, our plan is to allow 8 of the copies to sell out, (they are actually listed as free) and retain the final copy for archives.
- Early last fall I was contacted by author George H Edmonds who offered to ship 24 free books to HIPS to help inform our membership about Bertrand Farr. I worked with him to write a store front synopsis and this publication was our most purchased item this year. As of today, we have 13 copies left.

- We sold 4 additional Bliss books this year, 1 Iris Note Cards and 6 ROOTS flash drives, (this was our second most popular item).

For 2017 shipping expenses I have requested a total of \$150.00 from the treasurer which was requested and received in increments of \$50.00. As today, I have a reserve of \$48.14.

I have expanded and continued to update the Book of Business for the Publication Sales Chair position.

Regarding other HIPS activities:

- In late December 2016, I became aware that Blue J Iris was going to conduct a massive iris clearance event and it was starting January 1, 2107. Many of the iris listed qualified for inclusion in our Guardian Gardens program. I notified Doug Paschall of the event and by his request I conducted the communications with Blue J Iris to obtain first consideration for purchase of these cultivars. Consequently, we were able to buy up many cultivars prior to them being offered to the general public.
- I maintained a working relationship with Wanda Rezac through the winter months of 2016 after our initial iris intervention the previous summer. She sent me one of her "little books" and from it I was able to create a map her entire iris garden. With her continued cooperation and in coordination with Doug Paschall, I organized and conducted the Part 2 Iris Dig in Sidney, Nebraska in July 2017. This proved to be a much larger event than the previous year the specifics of which are detailed in this Spring edition of ROOTS.

Respectfully submitted March 2, 2018

Susan A. Flow

Publication Sales Chair

2017 HIPS RHIZOME SALE ANNUAL REPORT

The 2017 HIPS Rhizome Sale was another success netting over \$13,700. We had 50 donors that sent in a total of 4,668 rhizomes. This year we made a few changes but kept the same format as last year. The sheer volume of rhizomes continues to be an issue for the team but we have plans to limit the number of cultivars for next year and some new ideas in place to make it easier and less time consuming for us all.

Donor rhizomes were sent in much better prepared this year after a couple of articles on the sale and rhizome prep in ROOTS by Nancy McDonald and a Donor Preparation pack sent out by Cathy Egerer. This saved the shipping team a lot of work and helped get the rhizomes to their new homes in much better condition.

We shipped out over 200 boxes and feedback from buyers was very good. I am confident that the sale will continue to help fund many projects for HIPS in the future. In addition to the sale, I also promoted HIPS in my local clubs, included HIPS brochures in my personal orders, posted historic iris photos on my garden and personal Facebook pages and continue work on some rescues. I am looking forward to another great year in 2018.

Judy Schneider
HIPS Rhizome Sale Chairman

ROOTS Editor Annual Report 2018-03

During the past year I found writers and photos, edited text, and did the layout on two issues of ROOTS, both of them on time. I did a tremendous amount of outreach for HIPS in general, as well as for the Guardian Gardens and National Collections programs. I attended all Board meetings and voted on all Board matters, and attended the AIS Convention in Des Moines. I also am Chair of the HIPS Bylaws Committee, and that wonderful group is close to ready to submit a proposed new set of bylaws to the Board. (I also served on the HIPS Rhizome Sale Committee, but that really isn't related to my position on the Board.) Like a good little Board member, I reported my current historic iris holdings to the Databank Chair. Overall I had a fantastic time being knee-deep in irises.

Nancy McDonald

2017 South Central Director Annual Report

Last summer I participated in the Wanda Rezac “year two” rescue in Sydney, NE. I also made email attempts to contact the different local iris societies and botanical gardens in my region, to introduce myself and offer a line of communication for historic iris related events or needs. I didn't receive a lot of feedback but that may be due, in part, to incorrect contact information. Finally, during the winter, I made email contact with the HIPS members of my region, and heard back from a few members.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Scott

Southeast Director Report for 2017

In 2017 I attended and participated in three board teleconferences and missed one. I served on the Budget Committee and on the Bylaws and Policy Committee.

I follow the board list serve regularly and engage in the many good discussions there. I also follow the website forum regularly and participate. I encourage more general members to use the website forum as it represents the best way to talk to other HIPS members collectively about all things iris and as well develop ideas and suggestions for the organization. Your board would like to hear them.

This spring I will be running for election to complete a second term as SE Director. If reelected I look for to working with the membership and board to grow the organizational.

Respectfully submitted;

Shaub Dunkley

SEDirector@historicism.com

HIS Southwest Region Report for 2017

2017 was a quiet year for me as SW director. I am vice president of my local Elmohr Iris Society, and serve on the board of AIS District 20.

I attended all board teleconference meeting this year. I was able to share some rare irises with other GG members, which was great fun.

I attended and judged at the Denver and Colorado Springs AIS Spring Iris Shows. These were two great opportunities to pass out HIPS brochures and talk to interested members of the public, who are also fans of the oldies.

I volunteer many hours of weeding to the Elmohr iris Society as we maintain the DR Loomis Memorial Garden here in the Springs. We also have a HIPS display garden there. It has been my particular baby, and I am happy to say that this is year number three for it.

Our Elmohr Iris Society sale continues to grow every year. We think we had over 6000 rhizomes this year. Many of those are historic. This July is our 52nd year as an iris Society, and our Iris show brought in the most money ever.

Since we are such an old club, we have many members who are in their 80s and 90s, who are growing some old irises. At our sale this year we identified all the Dykes winners, as well as all the historic. We find we have many customers who are looking for them. We also bagged up some Historic Irises, labeled with name and year, and sold them as Historic grab bags.

I was able to help rescue some oldsters, named and species, from a local Irisarian who was downsizing and plant them in my home garden to save them for future share outs.

Also attended two meetings of the Mountains and Plains (Denver) Iris club, which I love to do.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Baumgartner

HIPS Webmaster Report 2017

The website continues to be a resource for both HIPS members and the general public. Although I do not keep stats on the number of visits, I know from the email I receive addressed “to the webmaster” that many folks are using our site for both enjoyment and research. We have had some small Forum enhancements: One can “search” old forums for something that you remember from years ago. You can also “instant message” anyone who leaves a forum post. This also is useful since you might not know their email and want to send someone a private message.

Another improvement is that now we are a “secure” site, meaning we have switched to “https” instead of “http” protocol. Several people had complained we were not secure so hesitated to visit or purchase from the site. Some would get warnings from their browser that our site is “not safe” and recommended they don’t use it. As of approximately December 2017, we have our security certificate and our data is encrypted so this is no longer a concern.

I have also continued to add to new iris our Gallery, including a special set of new historic photos from the “class of 1988”. I have also added additional pictures to our existing gallery iris, when I get exceptional photos from our members. While there are some historic photos in the gallery where good photos just don’t exist, my emphasis has been “quality over quantity” when it comes to selecting pictures to post. Fortunately we have some excellent photographers who share their pictures with us.

We do plan for some Website upgrades this year. The main goal would be a much-improved membership database, second would be a speedier Gallery search. Fortunately our website has been quite stable thanks to our hosting service, Dreamhost, and I do not recall any downtime in the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Laetitia Munro, Webmaster