

- *ISA Volunteers Work in Garden*
- *A.I.S. - S.L.I. Convention 2018*
- *Rhythm of the Prairie 2017*



Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors A Monthly Newsletter of the Iris Society of Austin

IRIS AUSTIN



NO MEETINGS IN JULY AND AUGUST

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, Sept. 5, 6:30 P.M. – 9 P.M.

Greene Room

Pot Luck

Pricing & Cleaning rhizomes – Preparing for **SALE** at

Norris Conference Center

on **SEPTEMBER 9, 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.**

2018 CONVENTION

Kelly Norris and Gary White hosted a successful American Iris Convention in Des Moines, Iowa this spring showcasing beautiful gardens that beckoned attendees onward to the 2018 American Iris Society, the Greater New Orleans Iris Society, and the Society for Louisiana Irises Convention April 9-14 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The headquarters will be the Hilton New Orleans Airport Hotel located at 901 Airline Drive in suburban Kenner, 70062.

website: www.neworleansairport.hilton.com

The meeting rooms are spacious while guest rooms have a king or 2 double queen beds for 4 guests per room. The hotel shuttle is available on call and is 2 minutes away from the airport. The hotel is sound proofed so enjoy your stay and make reservations early.

Attendees will tour six gardens for 3 days:

Wednesday – Longue Vue House and Gardens,

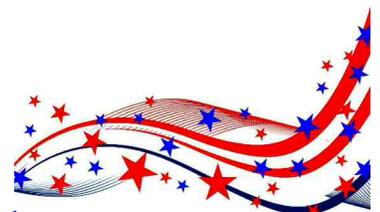
NOMA, Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden.

Thursday – A Louisiana Pond in Madisonville and Hammond Research Station of the LSU Ag Center

Friday – Baton Rouge Tour: Burden Museum and Gardens and the Baton Rouge Botanic Gardens

Paul W. Gossett and Joe Mussachia are the Convention Chairs for 2018.

APRIL 6-7, 2018 – The Aril Trek will be held in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Many of these exotic irises should be in bloom since they love the hot dry climate with very little water.



ISA VOLUNTEERS WORK IN GARDEN SATURDAY, MAY 20 (before the rain)



RHYTHM OF THE PRAIRIE

A 2017 Adventure

By Ken Fuchs

Monday morning, May 22, Jaime Hadley, Dara Smith, Jim Landers and I began our week-long adventure, a 1,950-mile road trip from Temple to Des Moines, Iowa and back. Our destination was “Rhythm on the Prairie,” the 2017 American Iris Society National Convention. Des Moines is on I-35, but when we got to Oklahoma, we left I-35 and headed for Missouri. We were all impressed with the beautiful green scenery as we drove across rolling hills in southwestern Missouri. Jaime had planned our travel itinerary, and our first day’s journey took us to Springfield. Our real goal was dinner at Lambert’s Café in Ozark, about 17 miles south of Springfield. Lambert’s is nationally famous for their “threwed rolls.” That’s right! The waiters throw delicious yeast rolls across the dining area to eager, hungry



customers. The food was excellent, and Jaime shared his large helping of deep-fried hog jowls, which were really large thick pieces of bacon. Well-worth the trip!

Dara planned our next stop for Tuesday. That morning we visited the Lost Valley Hatchery in Warsaw. The large aquarium had many varieties of colorful fish found in Missouri waters. There were large ponds for breeding and hatching outside, and visiting school children were learning to fish free of charge. Our main stop late that afternoon was Jim Hedgecock’s Comanche Acres Iris Garden near Gower. Jim’s peak bloom was several days before, but there were still lots of irises in bloom. We arrived around 5 and several customers were just leaving as we got there, so Jim and his wife Lamoyne gave us a relaxed private tour of their main display garden. Later, we had dinner at the popular Toot-Toot Family Restaurant in Bethany. Thirty minutes later we crossed the Iowa state line and around 9 we checked

in at the Des Moines Marriott Hotel, the Convention headquarters. We were delighted to learn that Tracey Rogers, Ellen Singleton, and Marney Abel had already checked in. Al and Barbara Elliott were also there.

This year’s national convention had one major change from previous conventions. Traditionally, the conventions have begun on Monday, with Board of Directors meetings scheduled throughout the day and into the late evening and then continuing on Tuesday. This year the convention began on Tuesday with reduced Board meetings, and the Silent Auction opened that evening. As usual, on Wednesday many different section meetings were held and there was also a very limited Simulated Iris Show with examples of the different types of irises. Section meetings that most of us attended on Wednesday, and on Thursday after the bus tour included those for the Japanese, Louisiana, Reblooming, Novelty, Spuria, and Tall Bearded Iris Societies.

Wednesday evening we were treated to a Welcome Reception at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. The main structure at the GDMBG is a beautiful conservatory inside an enormous geodesic dome. A tropical paradise enchanted us as we wandered the trails before attending the reception. Convention Chairperson Kelly Norris is the Director of Horticulture at the Botanical Garden, and he really knows how to organize a convention and arrange excellent meals. The Reception was a catered buffet of light foods, but there was plenty to eat and everyone was pleased. Afterwards, we strolled around a large oval-shaped garden behind the main building. It was surrounded by a large wall, and between the walkway on the



outside and the wall itself were hundreds of irises in full bloom, grouped in different large clumps of identical cultivars. It was a breath-taking feast for the

eyes. Before leaving, A.I.S. President Gary White officially welcomed everyone to Des Moines and to the Convention.

This year there were only two days of bus tours. On Thursday, all six buses followed the same route. Our first stop was the Brad Collins Garden located in a multi-acre field in rural Iowa, southwest of Des Moines in Madison County. The irises were in two



very long rows. There wasn't a lot of bloom, and mixed in with the guest irises were many seedlings. Garden judging classes were held here. After an hour and a half in the garden, we traveled back to Des Moines to the Botanical Garden, where we enjoyed another buffet luncheon, this time with the food served outside on the patio.

The Guest Iris Beds at the Botanical Garden were located in a fairly small area along the Des Moines River. Unfortunately, there were over 300 attendees and everyone crowded together to view the irises and take pictures. There were lots of blooms, but sadly, all of the beardless irises had been neglected, and there were a couple dozen name tags for Louisiana irises clumped together in a bare patch. Nearby were a couple more name tags, including Jim Landers' 'Lady of Lometa.'

On Friday, the buses split up, alternating destinations in the morning and afternoon. Our first



stop was the Wayne and Pam Messer Garden located in an urban setting in small town Iowa. It was a massive private garden extending on three sides of their house. The property was sloping and large clumps of blue Siberian irises greeted us as we got off the buses and walked up the driveway, enjoying the many blooms along the fence line and many more beside the house and in the backyard.

Our second stop was also on sloping ground. Kris and Tom Jurik's garden is located on a hillside just north of Ames, Iowa. The Juriks' house is surrounded by all kinds of trees and shrubbery and enormous hostas. The guest garden was nearby, and there were numerous blooms for us to see. A rather steep switchback walkway led to the Juriks' own private garden located in a large open flat area below. In the distance flowed the South Skunk River. On our drive from the Messer Garden to the Jurik Garden, our bus captain raved about the Juriks' large collection of peonies, and to our amusement she confessed that she had a severe case of "peonies



envy." She did not exaggerate, for we were amazed at the long rows of enormous pink, red, yellow, and white peonies, with clumps of Siberian irises filling in the spaces in between. There were also more rows of tall bearded irises to keep everyone busy admiring and taking pictures.

Our buses then took us to the Iowa Arboretum in Madrid, in Boone County. We enjoyed excellent box lunches in the large Arboretum Building. Outside, over 400 guest bearded irises were on display. The blooms in the beds were spectacular, but we had one major complaint. The first bed was in a circular design with double rows of irises, and a smaller circular bed was located in the center with a metal globe sculpture as the centerpiece. However, all of the name tags were facing toward the inside of the circle, which meant dozens of people were crowded



together trying to read the name tags at the same time. Several other beds had the same circular pattern. More beds were located along the pathways and they were convenient for viewing and very enjoyable.

Since there were no bus tours on Saturday, we took advantage of one of Des Moines' most popular attractions. Every Saturday morning there is an outdoor Farmers Market near the City Hall, just a few blocks away from the Marriott Hotel. The market went on for six or seven blocks and spilled over into the side streets, too. There were all kinds of vendors and street musicians, but for me the most enticing attractions were the fresh vegetable stands. I've never seen so much asparagus before, and one vendor had a table covered with many kinds of fresh mushrooms that were totally new to me. Another vendor had bouquets of fresh cut flowers, and in them were enormous flattie irises! The overall atmosphere at the



Farmers Market was very similar to that experienced at the State Fair.

After mingling in the crowds, we hurried back to the hotel because there were three hour-long symposium programs beginning at 9. Tony Hall from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in London did a presentation on the Juno iris species. He was very technical, providing Latin names for the Juno irises, but he had excellent pictures of them. Dawn Boyer did the second seminar on Artistic Arrangements. She had

lots of materials and "stuff" to show us what she used in her award-winning designs, as illustrated in the accompanying slide show. The third and, for me, the most interesting program was an illustrated biography of Agnes Whiting, presented by Cathy Egerer, president of HIPS. Iowa hybridizer Agnes



Whiting was the first woman to win the Dykes Medal for her 'Blue Rhythm' in 1950. We had found 'Blue Rhythm' in full bloom near the entry to the GDM Botanical Garden. Her iris was the inspiration for the name of the 2017 convention, "Rhythm on the Prairie." Agnes Whiting's Dykes Medal was on display outside the large meeting room.

The Saturday evening Awards Banquet was relaxed and fun. President Gary White did the roll call for each of the regions, and former A.I.S. president Jim Morris announced all of the winners. Paul Black received repeated awards. Robert Hollingworth received the Dykes Medal for his Siberian iris 'Swans in Flight.'

Our 2017 adventure came to a close on Sunday, May 28. We left Des Moines at 7 A.M., got on I-35, and drove straight through all the way to Temple, arriving around 9 P.M. Jaime and Dara had another hour's drive back to Austin. We were all exhausted, but we all had vivid memories of our week-long excursion.



MINUTES OF THE IRIS SOCIETY OF AUSTIN
May 9th, 2017

The meeting was called to order and presided by Donna Little. Minutes from last month's meeting were approved as presented in the ISA Newsletter.

Announcements:

Ellen Singleton reported on the AAGC meeting for ISA – check the website for future dates of Zilker activities of upcoming shows and sales. Ideas have been requested for the Master Plan of Zilker and surrounding area. Email contacts for ZBGC:

Chair of ZBGC Board –
jennifer@studiobalcones.com

Executive Director of ZBGC:
catnewlands@zbgconservancy.org

Start thinking of irises for the sale and let Ellen know what you would like to see offered for sale. Sale date is Saturday September 9th, 2017

A sign-up list was passed around for next year's planning for hospitality volunteers. This person usually keeps supplies of tablecloths, utensils, cups, napkins etc.

Iris City has "Amas" Collected by Sir Michael Foster 1885.

Contact Shelia Senghas if you would like to donate rhizomes for the Hondo Garden Club.

Treasurer's Report:

A payment of \$280.00 for active membership for ISA was made to AAGC.

For comparison of year-end balance: June 2016 balance was \$13,871.17 and May 2017 current balance is \$12,891.19.

Austin Iris Club business:

- A workday in the front ZBG iris beds was scheduled for Saturday May 20th, 2017 at 9:00am.
- There are no ISA meetings during the months of June, July.
- Due to the schedule of the 2018 American Iris Society Convention to be held in conjunction with the Louisiana Iris Society Convention in New Orleans, Tracey Rogers will try to make arrangements to schedule our show on one of these dates: April 7th or March 31st of 2018.

Program:

Jaime Hadley presented the awards and medal certificates from this year's show and handed out copies of the show report. Shelia thanked everyone who helped make this year's show a success.

Important Dates:

ISA Meeting – Tuesday September 5, 2017 at Zilker 2017 Region 17 Convention – August 4–5, 2017 Dallas

ISA Sale – Saturday September 9, 2017

ISA Show – TBD

American Iris Society/Society of Louisiana Irises Convention – April 9–14, 2018 New Orleans, LA

The meeting was adjourned.

Dara E. Smith, Secretary



Region Baskets in the Convention Silent Auction Room



The Region 17 Basket

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Above: Garden judging and crowds in the Collins Garden; ISA members in front of the GDMBG Conservatory; gigantic hostas in front of the Juriks' house; different varieties of mushrooms for sale at the Farmers Market.