



Aurora

Newsletter of the Can-West Iris Society

Summer, 2020

Volume 14, Issue 2

Update From the Organizing Committee

Better late than never! Things have not gone as planned for anyone in 2020. And it is not done with us yet. But we soldier on...

With the cancellation of the annual show, there was a void in our members' iris season. So, we came up with the idea for a virtual iris show to be conducted on the group's private Facebook page. Thank you to El Hutchison, Deborah Petrie, Jennifer Bishop and Mary Kurtz for all the valuable input and for all the work that went into getting it done despite the obstacles. It turned out wonderfully and you can read all about it starting on page 2.

The usual member profile did not appear in the Spring issue as is usual. And so, it appears inside starting on page 9. Thank you to Kelly Park for writing about her iris and gardening journey and for revising it when it became apparent that 2020 was not going to be a 'normal' year.

And then there was the final blow, the cancellation of the annual rhizome sale. I think this one was the hardest to come to terms with for all of us. We hope to be back in 2021 with an even bigger and better sale. Of course several factors, many of which we cannot know until much later, will impact decisions going forward. As new developments occur we will keep you all informed.

As indicated at the beginning of the year, no members will be dropped from the membership list in 2020. Once we have a better idea of how we will be going forward, we will let you know what you need to do when to keep your membership current.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about anything CWIS related, do not hesitate to contact any of us on the Organizing Committee at:

Jennifer Bishop, jennifer@dataways.com Deborah Petrie martyaddict@gmail.com
El Hutchison - Eleanore@mymts.net BJ Jackson - jacksonb@mts.net

Stay safe everyone!

CWIS Virtual Iris Show 2020 - Final Results

(Compiled by BJ Jackson)

Thank you to all who participated.

Total number of entries - 101

Total number of exhibitors - 10

Number of entries by section:

Section 1 MDB - 6

Section 2 SDB - 29

Section 3 IB - 15

Section 4 MTB - 11

Section 5 BB - 4

Section 6 TB - 21

Section 7 NOID - 6

Section 8 Species - 2

Section 9 SIB - 7

Division 1 Section 1 MDB

1 Spot of Tea - Sandy Proulx

2 Mighty Mouse - BJ Jackson

HM Flirty Eyes HM - Sandy Proulx



Spot of Tea/Flirty Eyes

Division 1 Section 2 SDB

1 Fruit Cup - Suzanna Durand

2 Pal Sam - BJ Jackson

3 Stylish Miss - Marilyn Kusler

HM That's The Spirit - Suzanna Durand



Fruit Cup/Pal Sam

Division 1 Section 3 IB

- 1 Spring Bonnet - BJ Jackson
- 2 Apache Warrior - Mary Kurtz



Apache Warrior/Spring Bonnet

Division 1 Section 4 MTB

1. Fernie Bridge - BJ Jackson
2. Scrambled - BJ Jackson
3. Bold Imp - BJ Jackson



Bold Imp/Scrambled

Division 1 Section 5 BB

1 Cranapple - Marilyn Kusler
HM Sonja's Selah HM- Donna Reble



Sonjah's Selah

Cranapple

Division 1 Section 6 TB

1 Wabashine - Mary Kurtz
2 Quaker Lady BJ Jackson
3 City Lights - Donna Reble
HM Raven Girl - Donna Reble



Wabashine



City Lights

Division 1 Section 7 No ID

1 N1 - Donna Reble
2 N6 - Ted Sobkovich
HM N3 - Ted Sobkovich



N1



N6

Division 1 Section 8 Species and Species-X/ Best In Show
- *I. variegata* var. *reginea* BJ Jackson



Division 1 Section 9 SIB

1. Grandis - Jodi Lockyer
 2. Ginger Twist- Ted Sobkowich
- HM Nothing But The Blues - BJ Jackson



Grandis

People's Choice Award - TB Better Than Butter - Donna Reble



Educational Opportunity

There is one last webinar being planned in the AIS summer series coming up. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 2nd at 7:30 pm CDT for a presentation and judge's training session given by Jody Nolin on "Species Irises". You don't have to take the test but you will definitely learn something!

The webinar is conducted via Zoom Webinars and an email invitation to register online will be sent to all AIS members a week before each event. Once you register you will be sent the webinar's link.

All webinars are FREE of charge to all members of AIS, AIS sections, and local iris clubs including CWIS. If you are not an AIS member but want to participate, send an email to aiswebinars@gmail.com.

Did You Know....

- that one man alone is responsible for the existence of Space Age iris? That man is Lloyd Austin from California.*
- that Space Age iris are bearded iris with appendages protruding from the ends of the beards? They can have horns, spoons or flounces.*
- that Space Age iris fall under the purview of the Novelty Iris Society formed in 2015 which also includes broken colour, variegated foliage and flat shaped flowers affectionately known as 'flatties' among others?*

Rebloom Reports

It is that time of the season when rebloom can occur even in our cold zones. Should you be lucky enough to have rebloom in your iris garden, please let BJ Jackson know either by email at jacksonb@mts.net or by posting to the CWIS group Facebook page. It doesn't happen often so when it does, members want to know that it is happening.

Member Profile - Kelly Park

My Garden Story

I have always had a love of gardening and all things green. Gardening provides such satisfaction and can be very rewarding. I think it is also a form of therapy, a way to escape after a stressful day at work. It offers us a chance to clear our minds and focus on the present.

From the time my husband and I moved into our first house we have enjoyed landscaping and creating gardens. It started with one garden in the front yard and the vegetable garden in the back. Then as things grew and more plants were obtained, another garden gets added, and so on. Our weekends were always busy with yard work; it was busy, but it was an enjoyable busy.



I can't recall the number of yards of soil that we have hauled into our yard and gardens, but I have wonderful pictures of the kids sitting and playing in the pile of soil at the base of the driveway, and using their plastic wheelbarrows to haul the soil around the yard to help us. And then there were the rock hunting trips, we would take a picnic lunch and drive out to the beach for the day, always returning home with a few rocks for the garden in the trunk of the car. Wonderful family time, and at the same time transforming the different spaces in our yard.

Our flower gardens started out with basic plants, annuals mostly. As we learned more and discovered the availability of perennials, every year we added more plants, many of which were donations from friends and co-workers. This, of

course, led to some big mistakes; Chinese Lanterns, Lily of the Valley, and Bellflower to name a few. I learned some hard lessons this way.

As my love for plants grew so did the number of gardens in our yard. This is quite a challenge for a small city residential lot as there is only so much space, but it was never a difficult decision to remove some of the grass and replace it with another flower garden. Now most of our plants are perennials and I try to have a flow of heights, colors, and blooming times. Always making notes of what does well, what needs to be moved, and where there are “holes” that need to be filled.

Before the availability of the internet I would scour through magazines and save pictures of gardens to use as inspiration. As the wind and snow howled outside our living room window, I would be thumbing through magazines planning my gardens. Then when spring arrived, I couldn't wait to get into the garden centres, to walk through the greenhouses, feel and smell the humidity, and discover what was new.

I love irises. Always have. The shape and color of the flowers, the ruffles, and the spiky leaves. We always had irises in our gardens, but they were the typical purple and white ones. One year I found a light blue iris at a greenhouse; it went in the garden that runs along the side of the house. It is one of the first irises to bloom each spring and has been split up and shared multiple times.

I had seen beautiful colored irises in garden catalogues but never thought it was a possibility to grow these in Winnipeg. Until I met Sandy! My co-worker's sister, Sandy Proulx, started including me on her “Iris of the Day” pictures and I was hooked. I couldn't wait to check my email and look at the day's newest pictures. She invited me to tour her gardens, shared plants with me, introduced me to other iris lovers, and told me about the Can-West Iris Society. I immediately joined and was able to participate in the yearly iris sale fundraiser purchasing several irises the first year.

The first spring that I was a member of CWIS I attended the spring show at the Bourkevale Community Club and was in awe at the many different varieties and colors on display. I also discovered the sale table; I went home with many new irises that first year. I also went home with a large wish list, taking pictures of the flowers on display hoping to find them at future sales. As the years have passed since that first show I have obtained many of the plants on my wish list, always finding room to add another iris.

It is an adventure each spring as I start touring my gardens watching for signs of life. Sometimes I haven't even started the spring clean up and the iris leaves have started poking through the warming soil. I print out my garden lists and check

daily to see what is coming up. Keeping my fingers crossed that some of the special ones have made it through the winter and watching the struggling plants and making a note to move them if they aren't growing or flowering.

I have a variety of different irises in every garden in my yard. I enjoy the spring color of the flowers as much as the leaves that provide a wonderful background for my summer blooming perennials. I started out picking my iris plants by the flower color, then by the different markings on the flowers, and then I started searching for names that I could associate with family members and/or had special meaning to me. ***Spot of Tea*** for my mother-in-law, ***Alene's Other Love*** for my niece, and ***Buster*** after my husband's first dog. What a wonderful surprise when I came across ***Ruth's Choice***, I had to have that one in honour of my mother who is no longer with us. But how disappointing when it did not make it through the winter of 2019. I was hoping to find a replacement at this year's show, but the world had different plans for us. Unfortunately, the gardening community of CWIS was not able to come together this year due to the COVID-19 virus.

Gardening is a wonderful hobby. Given the climate we live in and the fact that most of us spend the winter indoors in isolation for several months of each year, gardening is a great way to get outside and enjoy the outdoors, get some exercise, and meet people. It is because of gardening and working in our gardens that we are able to keep in touch with neighbours and meet new people and dogs. Many friendships have been made as folks stop to talk as we work in the garden. Meet another gardener, find another friend! And happy gardening!

Some favourites from Kelly's 2020 season...





Digeridoo



Fairy Firefly



My Cher



Snow Gnome