

- 2016 AIS Convention in Newark
- A Horticulture Check List
- 2016 AIS/Region 17 Convention



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

IRIS AUSTIN



**NO MEETINGS JUNE, JULY,
AUGUST**

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, September 6, 2016 7 P.M.
Greene Room
Pot Luck
**Iris Rhizomes: Pricing and
preparing for Sale of Sept. 10**

EVENTS:

**May 16-June 24 – Woodland Faerie
Trail**

**June 4 – Work Day in Iris Garden at
Zilker**

**June – All AAGC dues of \$10 per
member due**

**June 18 – Heart O' Texas Orchid
Society New Growers' Seminar**

**July 16 – Travis Co. Master Gardeners
Education**

**August 6 – Travis Co. Master
Gardeners Education**

**August 20 – Travis Co. Beekeepers
Show and Sale**

**September 3 Austin Cactus &
Succulent Society Sale**

**September 17 Texas Bamboo Society
Show and Sale**



CONFESSIONS OF A NEWARK NEWBIE

by Ken Fuchs

Eight members of the Iris Society of Austin journeyed to Newark, New Jersey, to attend the week-long 2016 American Iris Society National Convention May 23-28. Al and Barbara Elliott drove all the way, while Dara Smith, Jamie Hadley, Donna Little, Carolyn Wylie, Jim Landers, and Ken Fuchs flew the friendly skies to the Garden State. The Convention site was the Newark Liberty International Airport Marriott Hotel.

Jamie and Dara arrived in Newark late Saturday morning (the 21st) and spent the weekend in New York City, where they visited the World Trade Tower, saw a Broadway show (*An American in Paris*), attended a WNBA game at Madison Square Garden (New York Liberty vs. Los Angeles Sparks), and dined in China Town.

Jim and Ken arrived Saturday afternoon, and later that day, Convention Chairperson Paul Gossett and they began stuffing the registration envelopes (I served as registrar for the Convention). In all, there were 221 envelopes that I had shipped via UPS to the hotel. We finished stuffing the envelopes Sunday morning. Paul had a rental car and the three of us drove into the nearby Portuguese section of Newark for lunch at a Chinese buffet. Other attendees were not so lucky, as the hotel was completely isolated on the airport grounds, and the hotel food was quite expensive. An option that most of us took at meal times was the hotel shuttle van which ran every 15 minutes to the airport terminals, where there were a

number of food courts.

Monday was the first day of registration. Barbara Elliott, Happy Carver, Claire Harding, Cheryl Deaton and Winona Stevenson (from California), and Jim all



helped add more materials to the registration envelopes. As Convention attendees signed in and picked up their envelopes, convention books and bags, Ken kept an ongoing record on his computer of those present. Donna Little arrived Monday afternoon.

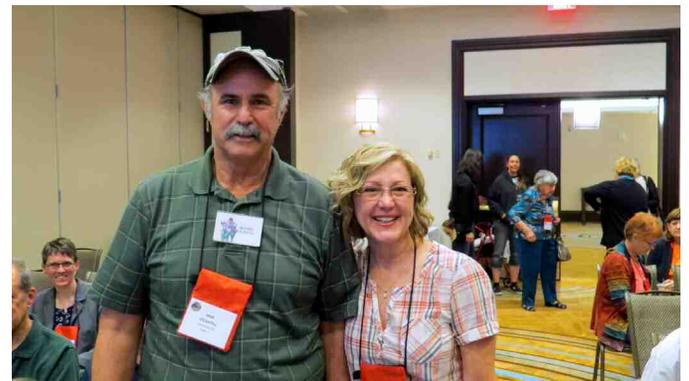
Tuesday was the optional tour, and two buses took us to Philadelphia, where we visited the U. S. Independence National Historic Park. There were hundreds of school kids there and we were unable to obtain tickets to enter Independence Hall. Nevertheless, we enjoyed seeing and getting up close to the Liberty Bell and strolling around Independence Hall. Donna Little managed to venture on her own and she visited Ben Franklin's grave. Later, back on the bus, we learned that Congress Hall, next door to Independence Hall, was open, and Jaime and Dara got to visit and take pictures in the room where the Declaration of Independence was signed.



Our next stop was several miles away — the Morris Arboretum. After lunch at the outdoor Compton Café, we joined several walking tour groups and strolled through the sprawling park-like grounds

of the Arboretum, which focuses on a vast collection of trees situated on several hillsides.

Wednesday was primarily devoted to section meetings, and many more attendees arrived and registered throughout the day. Mike Lockett, who was our guest speaker at the 2012 Region 17 Meeting hosted by the ISA, was the guest speaker for the Reblooming Iris Society program. The main event of the day was the HIPS program which honored special guest Milan Blazek from the Czech Republic, a foremost hybridizer and expert on historical irises. Carolyn Wylie checked in while the HIPS meeting was in progress. Other attractions were the Silent Auction Room, organized and run by Debbie Strauss and Nick Stewart, and the Boutique.



The only negative aspect of the Convention was the Wednesday evening Welcome Reception. Convention attendees are accustomed to a sit-down dinner on Wednesday with speakers and a roll call of attendees from all of the Regions. The Reception was planned to be a stand-up affair with people circulating and enjoying hors d'oeuvres at a number of tables around the large dining room. Shortly before the doors opened, a number of large tables each seating twelve people were set up, and when everyone entered, as usual they rushed to find a place to sit, but there weren't enough tables. Then three waiters, each carrying a tray of the snacks, began circulating among the more than two hundred guests. It was totally inadequate, and many disgruntled attendees left the room in disgust. AIS President Gary White called the roll and welcomed the attendees from Australia, New Zealand, Ecuador, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Canada. Then members of the Convention Committee distributed the lovely cloisonne Convention pins to everyone still in the room.

Thursday morning all five buses drove to The Presby Memorial Iris Gardens, located in Essex County eleven miles from the hotel, but due to heavy

traffic, the drive lasted 45 minutes. At the entrance way stands the lovely two-story Frank H. Presby home. The overall sight of the gardens to the side of the house was an explosion of colors and a feast for the eyes. To our good fortune, the gardens were in the peak of bloom. They are primarily laid out in several long rows about the length of a football field. Besides



the Convention guest gardens, there were separate beds containing Dykes Medal winners and hosts of antique irises, many dating back to the mid-nineteenth century. A catered gourmet lunch was served in a large white open tent in the center of the gardens. It took over an hour to get everyone through the long serving line, but the food was excellent. Following lunch there were garden judging classes.

On Friday we visited two private gardens in Pennsylvania. The George Hildenbrandt Garden in Slatington, Pennsylvania, is also situated on a hillside. The upper garden contains many older, unnamed irises, but they were still enticing to eager



photographers. The guest iris garden, located in the lower area, was weed free and immaculately kept. Most of the bearded irises were in full bloom. Even lower were rows and rows of beardless irises, but they were not blooming. There, as well as in the Presby Gardens as well as in the George Boyce garden, we found Jim Landers' 'Lady of Lometa.' All three plants looked hearty and healthy, but there were no blooms

yet.

We ate lunch a few miles away at the Blue Shamrock Golf Club in Palmerton. The delicious food was all Amish dishes served buffet style. Our host was the ever jovial Convention Co-Chair George Boyce, and after lunch we visited his nearby Glenara Gardens located amid several other homes in a very rural setting. The beds needed lots of weeding, and there weren't many irises in bloom. Below the garden was a very large pond, and we were amazed when we spotted several yellowish objects on the far side. Then we realized they were koi and must have been 2-3 feet long.



Saturday morning the buses returned to Presby for a half-day visit. Several attendees opted not to go back, including Jaime, Dara, and myself. We took the train to the City, and after navigating the subway system, we emerged at Columbus Circle. After lunch at Benash Delicatessen across the street from Carnegie Hall, we took a taxi uptown to the Jewish Museum to see a special exhibit of drawings and paintings by Roberto Burle Marx, a famous Brazilian modernist landscaping artist. We also enjoyed the museum's major exhibits, showing the entire history of the Jewish people. We then strolled down Fifth Avenue past the Guggenheim Museum where we caught a taxi and returned to Columbia Circle, and then back to Newark.

The Awards Banquet Saturday night was a total success. The food was truly outstanding. The beautiful table decorations were all done by a young artist named Svetlana McCoy-Rusanova from New Jersey. After the trophies and awards were presented, Gary White invited everyone to attend "Rhythm of the Prairie," the 2017 AIS National Convention in Des Moines, Iowa. When the banquet came to a close, George Boyce and his wife Carol walked in accompanied by Ripper, their delightful Corgi. The table decorations were all moved to the table beside

us, and seeing them all together was breathtaking. So much beauty in one small space.



Looking back, I can honestly say the 2016 AIS Convention in Newark was a real success. It was rather small in comparison with past conventions, but any conventions following the ones in Portland are indeed small. We started with 221 registrations and had four walk-ins. One registrant never showed up, so our final number was 224. There were some

inconveniences with the hotel's isolated location, but the hotel itself was very nice and the staff were very friendly and accommodating. We look forward to traveling to Des Moines next year and seeing so many of our convention friends again.



HORTICULTURE

With some wind storms passing through Central Texas and rains coming each week, irisarians have much to accomplish in the garden after the conclusion of the local shows. These are a few of the things in a check-off list:

- * Cut bloom stalks and seed pods unless you are a hybridizer.
- * Some diseased leaves can be cut off the plant and dead leaves over the rhizome can be discarded as well.
- * Remove trash, tree leaves, and broken twigs and limbs after the storms.
- * Weed the garden weekly since horse herb, grasses, day flowers, and tree seedlings may emerge after the rainy season.
- * Feed the irises by giving bearded irises bone meal or Hasta Gro, acid fertilizer for Louisianas, and rose food for Spurias.
- * Check plant labels by using your plot plan that you created after planting the garden.

Have you selected certain irises to contribute to the sale in September, the Saturday after Labor Day? Plan to dig to remove some of the clumps that are too thick to bloom very well.

Ellen Singleton has ordered bearded irises and spurias. Pictures of the irises were on the table in the auditorium during the May meeting. Ken Fuchs also

showed irises from the shows that captured the attention of the judges. You will want some of these beautiful irises for your own garden.

2016 REGION 17 CONVENTION

Deep in the Heart of Texas, sponsored by the Waco Iris Society, will be held in the Hampton Inn and Suites Waco South, 2501 Marketplace Drive, Waco, TX 76711 on August 19 and 20.

Room rates are \$109 per night plus tax for Queen (2) or King (1) or \$119 per night plus tax for a King Studio Suite. This includes a complimentary deluxe continental breakfast and WiFi.

Reservations must be made by July 29 to receive this group rate.

The Friday Welcome Banquet and the Saturday Night Banquet are \$50 for both while Judges Training is \$5.

Region 17/AIS Convention is always a fun time as well as an opportunity to learn about irises and to purchase some of the new iris introductions during the auction. Plan now to attend.

Registration can be made through Ken Fuchs.