

For Iris Lovers in the Cold Zones



Aurora

Newsletter of the Can-West Iris Society

Spring, 2010

Volume 4. Issue 1

Update From the Organizing Committee

Spring is definitely in the air! The sun is warming, the snow has said goodbye (hopefully) and plans are being made for 2010 events.

It was a hard winter in more ways than just weather. CWIS member Janice Moser passed away. Jennifer Bishop has written a poignant piece for us profiling her sister and her gardens. See page 4 for this tribute to a woman many of us didn't know all that well but one who loved her iris. Condolences also go out to the Hutchison, Petrie and Jackson families for their losses, too. May the gardens provide solace to us all and the iris blooms lighten our hearts.

Our congratulations go out to B. J. Jackson for her elevation to Garden/Exhibition Judge status and to Ed Czarnecki who now has Apprentice Judge status with the AIS. This will take a lot of pressure off our senior judge, El Hutchison. Now we don't have to bring in outside judges unless we want to do so. As much as we enjoyed having Sandy, Maureen, Kate and Terry here, it is very nice having qualified judges nearby!

Switching now to events for 2010, the Organizing Committee has listened to the membership. After last year's show several members asked for a Show Grooming Workshop and we're having one! It will be held on Sunday, May 30th hosted by Sandy Eggertson. It promises to be a wonderful day for learning as well as socializing. See page 2 for details and page 3 for directions to Sandy's gardens. Pre-registration is required by May 24th so we know how many to plan for.

The 3rd annual CWIS Show is on Sunday, June 13th, again at Bourkevale Community Centre. Everyone involved loved the space but several expressed the desire to have it held on Sunday. So we scheduled it for a Sunday this year to try it out. The show schedule is attached for your information. We have 'tweaked' the show schedule to allow for more awards and award winners sharing the Queen's Table, too! We are pleased to welcome awards sponsors OnRussell Gardens for the historic section and Chuck Chapman for the Canadian hybridization award. It is going to be great!

The mandate of CWIS is to put members first and the Organizing Committee takes it seriously. If you have any comments, suggestions or constructive criticisms, please let us know. As far as we know if it ain't broke, don't try to fix it so if we don't hear from you, we won't know what you are thinking.

Finally, the most anticipated event of the CWIS year, the rhizome sale will be held as per usual, the first weekend in August. More details will be provided in the summer newsletter due out in late June or early July.

Kate Brewitt, RVP for AIS Region 16 (Canada) has provided her report on page 9. Watch out for details on the 2011 AIS convention which is being held in Victoria BC and for which CWIS is serving as the Awards Committee. Might be a great chance for a Canadian vacation, lots of awesome iris events and no borders to cross. Bonus!!!

As usual, we are available to help whenever and however we can. Please don't hesitate to contact any of us:

Jennifer Bishop – jb@dataways.com
Barbara-Jean Jackson (jacksonb@mts.net)
Deb Petrie – petrie@mts.net
El Hutchison – elianore@mts.net

So sit back, relax, partake of your favorite beverage and enjoy this newsletter, the first for a new growing season. Happy Iris Growing 2010!

Workshop Opportunity

Growing to Show

Sunday, May 30th 2010 at 1 p.m.

Place: Sandy Eggertson's House (see map next page)

We are very pleased to be able to offer this hands on, educational workshop to members of CWIS. Hosted by Sandy Eggertson in her gardens, participants will learn everything they need to know about getting their iris stems ready for the show. Facilitated by El Hutchison and B. J. Jackson, you will be taken through all the steps you need to see that first place ribbon placed next to your show entry in June. Topics to be covered will include:

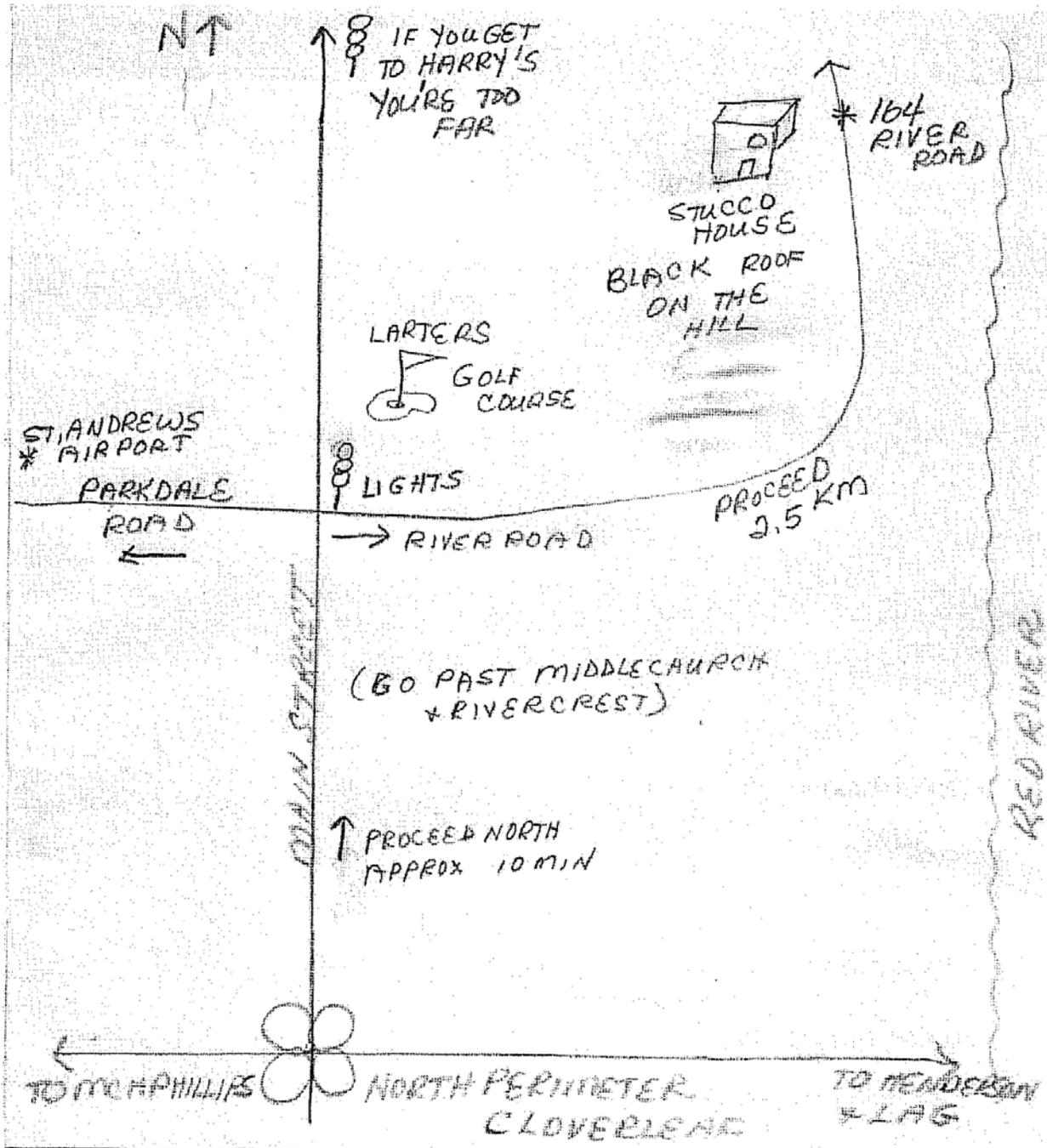
- essentials of the tool kit
- cutting stems
- staging stems
- selecting stems
- grooming stems
- what the judges are looking for

CWIS will provide light refreshments. Participants are asked to bring a lawn chair and to be prepared for inclement weather. We all know how fickle Mother Nature can be in a Manitoba spring.

Pre-registration is required by May 24th so we know how many people to expect. Please contact B. J. Jackson (jacksonb@mts.net) to have your name added to the list of those participating or if you need further information.

For those who are unable to attend, we are working to have the appropriate parts videotaped.

MAP TO SANDY EGGERTSON'S HOME SITE OF WORKSHOP



Profile - Janice Lynn Moser 1956 - 2009

By Jennifer Bishop



Daughter, Sister, Wife, Mother, Friend and Gardener

When BJ asked me to do this profile of Janice I thought " 'of course', it will be a snap". Well it has not been. In fact I have found it more difficult than doing her eulogy. It has, however, been a wonderful exercise for me, almost cathartic, because it has made me think about Janice when she was alive and not dwell on the fact that I lost a sister and a friend.

Janice was always smiling. Anyone who ever met her saw her smile first and then her beautiful and smiling eyes. Her entire life Janice only saw the beauty in life, people and her surroundings and her life was not always easy. She was a kind and generous person who treated everyone she met with kindness and dignity. From her friends and family to the homeless man she watched out for daily on Main Street by her transfer bus stop.

Janice was a relative newcomer to gardening. I could never understand why someone with her creative spirit who obviously loved nature didn't garden. She loved to camp, boat, fish, gather drift wood she would make into the most incredible art pieces and rocks - especially amethyst from which she made beautiful ornaments that she gifted to her friends and family...but she didn't garden.

About 7 or 8 years ago Janice went thru a particular stressful time in her life and as with every crisis and obstacle she encountered, she looked for a way to fix her problem. I was never able to

find out why but gardening seemed to be what she thought might be her salvation. Imagine my surprise when she said to me one day at work (we worked together for almost 10 years) 'Jen (and by the way she was the only person ever allowed to call me Jen) can you help me with my flower beds?' Well everyone knows the answer to that, right?

So we had a look at them - a few orange lilies, lots of Autumn Joy sedum, out of control rose bushes and some monkshood - pretty sparse - So I put the call out to all my gardening friends - 'got extras? I got a home for them'. Of course in true gardening spirit everyone came through with lots of everything - lilies from all divisions, hostas both large and small, iris from all classes, hens and chicks, delphiniums, sedums of everykind, peony, daylilies, daisies - well you get the picture.

Janice immediately set her 'Dear Sweet Husband' Brad to work digging flower beds, toting bags and wheelbarrows of soil around, moving rocks to edge the beds and generally doing the heavy work, while she followed behind lovingly planting all her new found treasures. It was a picture... Janice lovingly digging a hole, gently placing the plant in the hole, giving it a little water then gently patting the soil back around the roots all while her 3 little kittens watched her and then followed her to the next plant and the process would be repeated. With the exception of Selena, they were all quite well behaved in the garden - they seemed to understand that this garden was important to Janice - Selena, however, ate all the chrysalises from Janice's butterfly bush - an action which got her confined to the house and no longer able to play outside with the other kittens. I remember Janice being quite sad about having to punish her...but after all as Janice said 'she has to learn to respect and preserve precious things'.

Janice tended all those plants and beds with all the love a mother lavishes on her new born baby. Of course the first year nothing much happened but she was undaunted. She was patient and understood that she must wait for the reward - her word. And like all good avid gardeners she spent the winter searching the internet looking for new plants and drooling over the pictures, reading the seed catalogs - she would circle everything she wanted - finally I told her to circle the ones she didn't want that would be easier and generally garden dreaming and waiting for spring. She was outside as soon as the snow was gone checking her beds - which by the way were perfect because no weed was ever allowed to grow for very long in her beds.

Each morning she would tell me what was new in her beds, didn't know what the plants where called but the very fact that they lived the winter and where returning to her gardens was enough to make her happy. Then one morning she came into work so excited I thought she was going to explode...she could hardly talk or get the words out as she was telling me about the most beautiful flower that she had ever seen was in bloom in her front flower bed and I just had to see it and tell her what it was.

So I drove her home from work that night and she hardly waited for the car to stop before she bolted across the front lawn, dropped to her knees, reached out gently with her hands framed the bloom so I could see what she saw----- It was an MDB iris - purple- no idea what it was named - but it was the most beautiful iris I have never seen in no small part because it made Janice's entire body smile.

Once she saw that iris in bloom she said she NEEDED many many more. Janice went on to become a member of CWIS, a host garden for CWIS, donate to the annual sale (many of you probably grow her iris in your garden) and she would be the first in line to purchase new iris.

She expanded her garden and her knowledge over the years and was never afraid to experiment...she became a very successful gardener in her own right. And her garden made her happy. She was very proud of it and had the most incredible collection of garden knick nacks...interesting treasures wherever you looked.

Janice was very excited about her new iris purchases last year. Even after she was diagnosed with small cell lung cancer and knew she would not live as long as she had expected, she was planning changes to her garden and talking about new purchases and having Brad expand her beds to accommodate them.

We knew she did not have years left, only months but I had hoped that she would have enough time to see her iris bloom just one more time before God called her home to tend his iris beds. Alas, that was not to be, so I have included a few of Janice's named iris pictures for you to enjoy with me. You will notice they are in fact named; beautiful iris 1, beautiful iris 2, 3 4 5 ...because that is how she enjoyed them, that is how she thought of them...she didn't care what they were called, she only cared that they grew in her garden and they made her happy.





Beautiful iris 1



Beautiful iris 2



Beautiful iris 3



Beautiful iris 4



Beautiful iris 5

**All photos are from
Janice's beautiful
gardens.**

Photos courtesy of Brad Moser



From Janice's Facebook Profile

American Iris Society
(AIS) Region 16 2010 Spring Report
by Kate Brewitt, AIS Region 16 RVP

Greetings to all CWIS members.

My 'iris season' began on March 23 when my *I. neomarica* plant bloomed. If you have this indoor iris, you know if you blink you just may miss the spectacular flower it puts forth as it doesn't last more than a day. Since then my outdoor garden has come to life, putting on a wonderful show of *reticulatas* and *danfordiae*...and a whole bunch of heaved iris rhizomes. It's hard to believe that winter is over. Regardless of the work that lay ahead, I'm looking forward to this iris season. I hope you are too!

'Mad About Iris' in Madison WI – AIS 90th Anniversary Convention



The Madison Area Iris Society invites you to enjoy Madison and Wisconsin the week of May 31 through June 5 when they will host the American Iris Society National Convention. This Convention will also mark the 90th Anniversary of the American Iris Society which was founded in 1920.

If you haven't registered for this year's National Convention, the deadline is May 1. This is also the deadline for booking your hotel room in order to receive the special AIS room rate of \$119US/night.

The Madison Marriott West, 1313 John Q. Hammons Drive in Middleton will be this year's Convention Headquarters. More details can be found on the Convention website at www.madisoniris.org/Convention/Welcome.htm. Hopefully your 'Iris Madness' will bring you to Madison and Middleton for a great experience of 'Mad About Iris'.

'IRIS ~ ISTIBLE VICTORIA

2011 AIS National Convention – May 29 to June 3



In just over a year the 2011 AIS National Convention in Victoria, BC will begin. The British Columbia Iris Society and its Convention Committee have been diligently working on this event since April 2008. Everyone from the Hospitality Committee to the Publicity Committee is preparing for what promises to be an event not to be missed. Hope you will join us!

Your Convention experience will include the following,

Four host gardens: Hatley Park at Royal Road University, Glendale Gardens and Woodland, Government House Gardens and Finnerty Gardens at the University of Victoria. Links to these gardens are found on <http://sites.google.com/site/aisregion16/2011-ais-national-convention>.

A BONUS trip to The Butchart Gardens for all Convention attendees.

Guest irises from 51 hybridizers: 41 American, 5 Canadian and 5 from Overseas. The Canadians include Todd Boland (Newfoundland), Chuck Chapman (Ontario), Tony Huber (Quebec), Joyce Prothero (BC) and Val Saari (Ontario).

534 different iris cultivars: 440 bearded and 94 beardless irises.

A stay at a luxury Edwardian hotel. Yes, the Fairmont Empress hotel has been booked as our Convention Headquarters. Located in Victoria's Inner Harbour, this hotel has been lovingly resorted to capture her turn-of-the-century grandeur. If you have never had the pleasure of staying here, this is an opportunity of a lifetime. The 2011 Convention Committee has secured a Convention rate of \$139/night; a far cry from the regular \$300 plus/night room rate. Bookings are already being accepted at <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/ais>. Those who book before February 28, 2011 will have their names entered in a draw for one of two free night's accommodation. If you want to phone in your reservation, call 1-800-441-1414 and say you are with the 2011 American Iris Society National Convention.

This is the first time since 1955 that the American Iris Society's National Convention has been held in Canada. Mark your calendars and join us. **Experience the excitement for yourself!**

Don't Forget Our Special Membership Offer
October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010.

If a person/couple join the AIS for a triennial single or dual membership, either a new membership, or a renewing membership from a single or dual one year membership, AND join at least one AIS Section or Cooperating Society for a triennial membership, THEN all memberships will run for FOUR years for the price of THREE years.

NOTE: This special member discount plan will apply only to AIS Sections or Cooperating Societies that have agreed to accept the 'four-years-for-three' discount. To date, only the Species Iris Group of North America (SIGNA) section is not participating in this offer.

If you are interested in learning more about AIS Region 16, or the AIS, you can find more information on our website at <http://sites.google.com/site/aisregion16/>. You can also email me at aisrvp16@irises.org.

Show Volunteers Needed

A number of volunteers are required in order to assist the Show Committee to put on a great show. We can't do it alone!

People are needed to help out with setting up tables in the morning, registering exhibitors, assisting with the decorating and organization of the awards table, taking cash at the sale table, selling tickets for the raffle, clerking for the judges, setting out vases and water for exhibitors, talking with and providing information to visitors, etc. Anything and everything associated with the show, we can use your help!

Please contact anyone on the Organizing Committee if you can help out. CWIS needs you!!!