



PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SPRING! What we look forward to every year. Such an amazing time of the year. The trees are blooming, our plants are poking their little heads out for some sunshine and most importantly, our irises are starting to get ready for their big show. There is a lot to do now. Make sure you remove any debris/leaves & check your irises for aphids & thrips and give them some fertilizer (6-24-24) to boost their energy. I will have some 6-24-24 available at the meeting for anyone that needs some.

Besides getting our personal gardens ready, April is a busy, busy month. We are (finally) having an in person general meeting on **April 17** at Stoneridge Community Center. Hopefully most have us have been able to have our vaccinations and we are in a much safer environment. We will however, maintain social distancing. We will not be having a potluck and only water and coffee will be available. Feel free to bring your own drinks or snacks. We have an amazing speaker – Cathy Egerer with the Historical Iris Society is going to be with us. She will be talking about HIPS and how to use historical irisin our gardens.

Our Spring Sale will be on-line again this year. We will open our store on May 7th for club members and the general public on May 8th. All of our potted iris from last year will be available for purchase and pick up will again be at Brenda Griffin's home. Our webstore address is paisirisstore.com.

We will have an awesome opportunity this spring to visit one our local gardens! *Marilyn Wiley from Bloomer-Rang Iris Gardens* in Wilhoit will be opening her gardens for us. Details to be announced.

I hope to see many of you at our April 17th general meeting. This will be an exciting meeting with great information and best of all – amazing people.

Sherry

EVENTS

April 17 1:30 pm

Historic Iris Presentation

Stoneridge Community Ctr.

May 7-8 Online potted iris sale

May 7 members only sale

paisirisstore.com

TBA Iris Garden Tour—Wilhoit

Bloomer-Rang Iris Garden



Blueberry Tart C. Chapman 2002
SDB by Gary Miller

APRIL 17: HISTORIC IRISES: FROM SPECIES TO MODERN BEAUTIES

Hello, PAIS members!

My name is Cathy Egerer (“eager”) and I’m eager to meet you all and talk about historic irises. A little bit about myself: I’m the Immediate Past President of HIPS and their current Outreach Chair. I grew up in a gardening family; my mom loved anything with green on it, especially roses and peonies, and my grandmother lived next door and grew 100,000 gladioli every year for sale to local florists. Mostly I grumbled about weeding in the garden, but I learned a lot.

I call myself a “born-again gardener” because thirty years as an elementary teacher didn’t leave much time for gardening, and it wasn’t until I retired in 2008 and we moved north did the opportunity present itself. A mystery iris bloomed in a field next to the house, and that began my fascination with historic irises. This iris had been untended for over twenty years. And there it was, glorious as ever!

I quickly became a HIPS member and in 2013, offered my services to fill an empty seat on the Board as PR Chair. This led to a request in 2015 to run for the President position. After talking it over with my friend Nancy McDonald, who was a HIPS Life Member, I decided to give it a try. The Guardian Gardens program was just coming into existence and I wanted to be a part of helping it grow. The next four years were busy ones, as HIPS also established the Breeder Collections program and increased their outreach efforts to public gardens and historic landscaping projects.

Along the way, I adopted a collection of historic irises from a HIPS member who was moving and had to down-size. These included collections of irises by Grace Sturtevant, Jesse Nicholls, and Agnes Whiting. Soon I had three breeder collections of my own, and when I met Dennis and Sharon Luebkin at one of the AIS conventions, it led to a collection of Sturtevant irises at the Sharlot Hall museum, as Grace and Sharlot were contemporaries. I also sent Dennis some irises for the Firefighter’s Memorial, and in 2017 he worked to establish a collection of Agnes Whiting’s irises at the Marcusen Sculpture Garden. This felt right: until Agnes and Grace were the first women honored with the Hybridizer Medal from the AIS.

My fascination with historic irises continues, and I look forward to sharing their history with Prescott enthusiasts.



Smart 1991, Innerst SDB by Barb McCurry



Prospectus 2008, Keppel SDB by Brenda Griffin