

# The Iris Standard

## Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

### An affiliate of the American Iris Society

Volume 17 Issue 1 - Winter 2022

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The Ontario Iris Society has a  
Facebook page.

*We hope you will join us then...*

- upload your pictures,
- share your experiences
- ask questions.

*It's your posts that make it a success!*

#### ONIS Membership Fees

1-year single: \$10	1-year family: \$15
3-year single: \$25	3-year family: \$40

Check the ONIS website for details  
<https://sites.google.com/view/ontarioiris>

#### Visit the AIS WIKI

Use this link to access the *Iris Encyclopedia*  
of the American Iris Society,  
[WebHome < Main < Iris Wiki \(irises.org\)](http://WebHome<Main<IrisWiki(irises.org)).  
Find information about irises, hybridizers,  
and different iris societies.

#### Editor's Message

With the holiday season behind us, and the days getting longer, I am already looking forward to spring...only 3 months to go before the *reticulatas* start to bloom!



We had an amazing reblooming iris season. It started late August and continued until late November, as evidenced by the picture (left) of 'Precious Little Pink' taken on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Rather than see it freeze, I brought it indoors when an overnight frost was in the forecast.

Once again, we find ourselves 'house bound' due to the pandemic. Terry and I have kept busy by adding 2022 iris introductions to the AIS WIKI.

Many of the iris hybridizers are already posting pictures on their Facebook pages. If you are interested in 'the new stuff', in *President's Pointers* you will find instructions on how to easily find them on the AIS WIKI.

The Ontario Iris Society will be celebrating sixty years in 2022. Included in this edition is a bit of the history. Lots has changed since 1962. For me, the most notable change is the fashions. The story starts on page 3.

Finally, the AIS is having a membership drive during the months of March, April, and May. Details on how to receive a free AIS membership are found on page 6.

Otherwise, it's time to 'cozy up' with an iris catalogue or two...and dream about what I'll add to the garden. Kate

## President's Pointers

By Terry Laurin

### Happy 2022!

During November, the ONIS Board conducted the annual meeting via email exchange. We discussed the possibility of holding, and attending, various events in 2022 HOWEVER, with the surge in COVID cases in December and the return to COVID-19 restrictions, ONIS does not know at this time what in-person events will take place in 2022. Members will be advised as soon as we know.

That said, ONIS will continue to have the virtual iris show, which increases in popularity every year, as well as the on-line rhizome sale. Watch for details in the Spring edition of *The Iris Standard*.

### What's New on the WIKI?

As Photo Manager for the AIS Iris Encyclopedia (WIKI) I have been uploading pictures of 2022 introductions from hybridizers such as Thomas Johnson, Paul Black, Keith Keppel and the like. If you would like to see what's in the offering, here are instructions to easily find them on the WIKI.

1. Go to the WIKI: [WebHome < Main < Iris Wiki \(irises.org\)](http://WebHome < Main < Iris Wiki (irises.org))
2. Click on 'Search Iris Database'
3. In the Search box type '2022'. Under Search Options click on 'Text body' and 'All Public Webs'.
4. Click the Search button.

You will end up with lots of results however the names of the 2022 introductions will be prefaced by their Iris Group e.g. Mdb, Sdb, Mtb, Ib, Tb etc. Click on one...and prepare to be amazed! New introductions are being added regularly so check back for new additions.

Alternately, if you interested in only a particular size such as SDB, click on the Iris Group web located on the left-hand side of the page. In the Search box in the upper right-hand corner, type in '2022' and click enter. Only the 2022 introductions in that iris group will show up in the results.

It should be noted that the TB web is different. After clicking on 'Tall Bearded', scroll to the bottom of the page where it lists 5 alphabetical webs. Select one web and enter '2022' in the Search box in the upper right-hand corner. The 2022 introductions for that TB grouping will show up in the results. Repeat for the next TB web.

If you need help, email me. Otherwise ENJOY!

### 2021 AIS Region 2 Meeting

Last year's AIS Region 2 annual meeting was held via zoom. As Kathryn Mohr's term is complete, a new Regional Vice President (RVP) was elected. Neil Houghton of the Greater Rochester Iris Society (GRIS) is our new RVP. Cara Hutchings, also of GRIS, was elected as Assistant RVP. Annette Kuhn of the Western New York Iris Society (WNYIS) became the Region's new Treasurer, replacing Vaughn Sayles after over ten years of service. Kate Brewitt of the Ontario Iris Society (ONIS) continues as Secretary.

Following the meeting Cathy Egerer, past president of the Historic Iris Preservation Society, gave an illuminating presentation entitled 'Historic Irises – A Journey Through Time'.

If you are interested in finding out more about Region 2, starting in January 2022, monthly zoom gatherings are scheduled for the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Our first gathering will be on Tuesday, January 11 at 7:30 pm ET. Let me know if you'd like to join us and I'll make sure you receive a zoom login notification email.

As always, you can email me with any of your questions about irises, [tlaurin@rogers.com](mailto:tlaurin@rogers.com).





## Ontario Iris Society Celebrating 60 Years

*by Kate Brewitt*

Do you remember where you were on October 31, 1962? I don't remember exactly but given it was Halloween, and I was only five years old, I was probably out 'trick or treating' dressed as a clown, a princess, or one of my other 'go-to' Halloween costumes at that time.

In the village of Richmond Hill however, a group of twenty iris enthusiasts were gathering at the Richmond Hill Library to form the Toronto Regional Iris Group. Associated with the Canadian Iris Society (CIS), this was to be their first regional iris group. Because the CIS was based out of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, it was felt that more people would be able to participate in iris activities if the venues were more local. As a result they would get more benefit out of their membership and develop a keener interest in iris. If you are interested, the minutes from that first meeting can be found on the ONIS website, [Ontario Iris Society - Our History](http://www.google.com) (google.com).



1969 Toronto Region bus tour to the Laking Garden at the Royal Botanical Garden in Hamilton. Front left to right, Murray Smith, Doris Smith, and Jack Taylor.

The first president was Murray Smith who served for fifteen years. During that time the group held four meetings; a spring and fall meeting devoted to culture or slide programs of general interest, an iris show in June and an iris auction and sale in August

at the Civic Garden Centre in Don Mills. The group also promoted iris through a public display garden in Edwards Gardens.



*1974 - Display Garden at Edwards Garden*

Several bus tours were also organized whereby members and their guests would travel to iris gardens throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe region of Ontario...all for the low cost of \$2.50! They were always well attended with participants numbering between 40 and 50 people.



*1973 Toronto Region Bus Tour - R.D. Little's Garden in Richmond Hill. It was a semi-formal occasion with men in suit jackets and hats and woman in dresses or pantsuits.*

Subsequent presidents carried out the goals put in place by the members at the inaugural meeting. Spring and fall meetings with speakers and slide presentations continued at the Richmond Hill Library and later at the Aurora Public Library when the president resided in Holland Landing. As the group became more Toronto-centric, the meetings moved

to the St John's Rehabilitation Hospital in North York until eventually the group decided to focus on having only a spring flower show and a summer auction/sale.

At the beginning, the flower show was held in June at the Civic Garden Centre. Members cut bloom stalks from their gardens which would be entered in the show. These would then be judged according to the judging standards set out by American Iris Society (AIS). Trophies were awarded to those specimens deemed best in their class while others were awarded ribbons. Once the judging was over, the show would be opened to visitors to the Centre as a way to promote an interest in growing irises.

One year it was decided to move the flower show to Hillcrest Mall in Richmond Hill. Space was unavailable at the Civic Garden Centre, so an alternate venue had to be found. In the end it turned out to be a successful move as shoppers eagerly stopped to admire the beautiful flowers. This became the 'new home' for the show.



© Verna Laurin

*1979 Toronto Region Iris Show at Hillcrest Mall*

Within seven years though, the show moved back to the Civic Garden Centre and, later to the Don Mills Shopping Centre when, once again, the group was hoping to promote irises in a more public setting.

The August Auction and Sale has always been held at the Civic Garden Centre. August is the best time to dig and divide irises, and members donate their excess rhizomes to the sale to help raise funds for the group. It was a great way to enhance one's iris collection without 'breaking the bank' as rhizomes

sold for between \$1 and \$3, a price that still holds today.

Another part to this event was the rhizome auction. The Canadian Iris Society (CIS) bought rhizomes from various American and local hybridizers. They had these planted at the Lath House at the Royal Botanical Garden (RBG). Every August some of the members would meet at the RBG to dig rhizomes for the Toronto and Hamilton auctions. I had the pleasure of participating in this undertaking one year. It was a gruesome task that year because the RBG volunteers who cared for the rhizomes had applied the nematodes too late in the spring and we had to deal with a borer infestation. I can still see the look on the face of one of the members when he cut into a rhizome and borer guts sprayed in his face. YUCK!

As we entered the twenty-first century our group decided it was time to increase its presence in the iris world. In 2002 the Regional Vice President of AIS Region 16 (Canada), Sandy Ives, suggested that the group become an affiliate of the AIS becoming one of two AIS affiliates in Canada. Our new name became the Toronto Region Iris Society (ToRIS)



© K. Brewitt

*The ONIS Board, Jinny, Terry, and Lyn at 'Get the Jump on Spring' at the TBG*

In 2006 the Board decided it would be a good fit to associate with the newly renovated Toronto Botanical Garden (TBG), formerly the Civic Garden Centre. Their new goal to become a hub for plant-centred learning, conservation and research included promoting horticultural groups.



It was also at this time the Toronto Region decided to publish its own newsletter to better advise local members of club news and local events. A contest was held with members submitting possible names for the publication and “The Iris Standard” was born.

In 2010, AIS Region 16 (Canada) was dissolved. Affiliates in Canada were realigned with existing AIS regions in the United States. The Toronto Region Iris Society became an affiliate of AIS Region 2 which encompassed New York State. At the same time the Society changed its name to the Ontario Iris Society (ONIS) to better reflect the dynamics of its members who lived in various towns and cities throughout the Province of Ontario.



© K. Brewitt

*Ontario Iris Society Iris Show at the TBG.  
Visitors come to admire flowers as well as take  
photographs.*

That pretty much brings us up to date. The last two years have been interesting, to say the least. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way societies gathered. Fortunately technology allowed us to reinvent our events for a self-isolating, socially distanced society. Our show became ‘virtual’, and our sale went on-line. The first virtual flower show was a nail biter. Would people want to send pictures of the irises in their gardens? In the end, they did, and the event was deemed a success. The on-line sale was also a success as iris lovers are always on the lookout for suppliers of reasonably priced rhizomes. And we can’t forget our Facebook page which became more active as self-isolating gardeners eagerly shared experiences and pictures.

In October 2022 the Toronto Regional Iris Society/Ontario Iris Society will have been meeting

for 60 years. The players have changed; however the goal has remained the same; to share our passion for the genus iris. The last two years have taught us that we can include members at greater distances by having virtual flower shows and on-line sales. And hopefully, once we get back to a ‘new normal’, ONIS will reinstate its in-person events at the Toronto Botanical Garden.

One last important note. Our current president, Terry Laurin, has held this position since 2005, surpassing the 15-year record set by Murray Smith, the first Toronto Regional Iris Group president. Terry is also the nephew of Verna Laurin, one of the twenty charter members who attended the inaugural meeting that Halloween night in 1962.

### **AIS Board of Directors Award**

This distinctive award is neither a garden award nor an exhibition award. This award is given by the American Iris Society’s Board of Directors to honour an iris which has not won a Dykes Medal, but which clearly shows in its progeny that it is among the greats of ‘irisdome’.

Candidate cultivars for this award are presented to the AIS Board of Directors by the Awards Committee or by nomination from any AIS member. A nomination is sent to the awards chair with supporting documentation. A simple majority of the AIS Board of Directors is required to give this award. The Board of Directors Award, which is not an annual award, was established in 1972 and first awarded in 1975. Previous winners are, TB ‘Snow Flurry’ (Salbach, 1939) in 1974, TB ‘Tobacco Road’ (Klensorge, 1941) in 1975 Siberian ‘White Swirl’ (Cassebeer, 1957) in 1987. This year, Paul Black’s SDB ‘Chubby Cheeks’ was added to this prestigious list of recipients.

The following was taken from Paul Black’s Facebook post on November 12, 2021, after he got the news.

“It started out as our usual fall/winter cold and rainy day. A phone call from our American Iris Society President, Jody Nolan, changed all that. She told me that one of my earliest introductions, ‘Chubby Cheeks’ had been awarded the Board of Director’s

Award. I was overwhelmed and way beyond excited. I'm still a bit in disbelief.

It puts 'Chubby Cheeks' in some pretty select company. There have only been three other irises to receive this award.

Thank you to past AIS President, Gary White, for researching and recommending "Chubby" for this award and the AIS Board for voting for it.

When I made the crosses that led to its creation, I intended to create something of note but could never have anticipated the impact it would have on my hybridizing or its extension to both the SDB and IB classes overall. The majority of my SDBs (standard dwarf bearded) eventually trace back to 'Chubby Cheeks' and likewise other introduced SDBs after 'Chubby Cheeks'. It is also a noted parent in IB (intermediate bearded) breeding.

The trait that made it so special was the wider and more ruffled falls which it passed on to future generations.

To say I'm way proud of this award is a vast understatement. Time to celebrate one of life's beautiful moments.



'Chubby Cheeks' (Paul Black, R. 1984) Seedling 824E. SDB, 12" (30 cm), Early bloom. Standards. white ground, stitched light violet, greyed chartreuse band; falls white ground, stitched violet around outer portion, widely banded greyed chartreuse; pale violet beard tipped tangerine in throat; ruffled; pronounced sweet fragrance. Seedling B80-20: ('Concord Touch' x 'Daisy') X 'Soft Air'. Mid-America Iris Gardens 1985. [Cook-Douglas Medal 1991](#)."

## 2022 AIS Membership Drive



From March 2022 to May 2022 the American Iris Society (AIS) is having a Membership Drive and invites all eligible persons to participate.

During this time, if you join an AIS Section or an AIS Affiliate for the first time PLUS have never been an AIS member, you will receive a free 1-year AIS print membership, which consists of four printed copies of *IRISES - Bulletin of the American Iris Society*. Membership details can be found on the AIS website at [AIS Members – American Iris Society \(irises.org\)](https://www.irises.org).

### **For example,**

1. If someone joins ONIS, an AIS Affiliate, for 1-year (a \$10CA value) and has never been a member of ONIS or the AIS that person will receive a free 1-year AIS print membership (a \$30US value).

Details can be found on the ONIS website, [Ontario Iris Society - Join ONIS \(google.com\)](https://www.onis.org)

2. If someone joins an AIS Section (membership rates vary) and has never been a member of that Section or the AIS, that person will receive a free 1-year AIS print membership (a \$30US value).

The following groups are included in this offer. Links to their websites are provided so you can access details and membership forms.

[Dwarf Iris Society \(DIS\)](#)

[Median Iris Society \(MIS\)](#)

[Society for Siberian Iris \(SSI\)](#)

[Spuria Iris Society \(SIS\)](#)

[Society for Louisiana Iris \(SLI\)](#)

[Society for Japanese Iris \(SJI\)](#)

[Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris](#)

[Species Iris Group of North America \(SIGNA\)](#)

[Reblooming Iris Society \(RIS\)](#)

[Novelty Iris Society](#)

[Historic Iris Preservation Society \(HIPS\)](#)

## AIS Membership Drive - The Fine Print

This offer is valid only during the months of March through May 2022.

This incentive can not be combined with any other incentive offer from AIS Affiliates or AIS Sections.

This offer does not apply to prior members of the AIS nor to prior AIS Affiliate members and AIS Section members.

This offer is time-limited and quantity-limited. Act promptly during the timeframe specified! The AIS Membership Secretary will check for prior AIS memberships.

Please direct any of your questions to Terry Laurin, [tlaurin@rogers.com](mailto:tlaurin@rogers.com).

## Join the American Iris Society (AIS)



If the AIS Membership Drive is not of interest to you, regular AIS membership rates are as follows,

Full Membership (printed Bulletin + on-line access)

Annual: \$45 US – Single / \$50 US – Dual

Triennial: \$115 US – Single / \$130 US - Dual

Basic Membership (printed Bulletin only)

Annual: \$30 US – Single / \$35 US - Dual

Triennial: \$70 US – Single / \$85 US - Dual

E-Membership: One-year on-line access \$15 US.

Annual Youth Rates (under age 19)

\$8 US without a Bulletin

\$12 US with a Bulletin

Click here to go to the American Iris Society website and a list of additional membership types.

## Upcoming Conventions



### The American Iris Society (AIS) National Convention

**'Iris Enchantment'**  
**Las Cruces, New Mexico**  
**April 11- 16, 2022**

The 2021 AIS National Convention in Las Cruces, New Mexico was rescheduled to April 2022. The convention hotel, Hotel Encanto, is accepting reservations.

Registration details can be found on the convention website, along with other information, such as guest gardens, and programs, [2022 National Convention – AISRegion 23](#).

Howie Dash and Scarlett Ayres put together a YouTube video that highlights the convention gardens that will be visited. Check it out!

[AIS Webinar #17 "Preview of the 2022 National Convention at Las Cruces, NM" by H. Dash & S. Ayres - YouTube](#)



Looking for a Seedy Saturday close to home? Some communities are making plans to return to this event, either online or in-person. Check the Seeds of Diversity website for up-to-date information on 2022 Seedy Saturdays & Sundays in your neighbourhood, <https://www.seeds.ca/events>





## In the Months Ahead

**At the time of publication it is not known what events will take place in 2022 due to the continuing pandemic restrictions. As information becomes available ONIS members will be notified through 'The Iris Standard', by email or via posts to Facebook and Twitter.**



### **ONIS Annual Iris Show**

#### **Toronto Botanical Garden**

Tentatively scheduled for the first Sunday in June

### **ONIS Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale**

#### **Toronto Botanical Garden**

Tentatively schedule for the first Sunday in August

## It's a Virtual Life for Me!

Fortunately there are still virtual events! ONIS will have the following on-line events in 2022.

**May to July** – Get your cameras ready for the 2022 ONIS Virtual Flower Show. Watch the next edition of *The Iris Standard* for details on how to enter including the show schedule.

**July/August** – ONIS is planning to hold an on-line iris rhizome sale again in 2022. The Board is currently looking at sources. If you have any suggestions, please email the editor: [oniseditor@gmail.com](mailto:oniseditor@gmail.com).

## Welcome New and Renewing ONIS Members!

C. Blakeman – Hamilton, ON

A. Leggatt – Toronto, ON

## ONIS Matters

### **Your 2021/2022 ONIS Board**

Your Board for the upcoming year is as follows, Terry Laurin, President, Jinny Missons, VP, Lyn Hickey, Treasurer, Kate Brewitt, Secretary.

You can reach the any Board member by emailing [just1moreiris@gmail.com](mailto:just1moreiris@gmail.com).

### **ONTARIO IRIS SOCIETY (ONIS) INCOME AND EXPENSE STATEMENT OCTOBER 1, 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2021**

#### **ASSETS**

Bank Balance 01Oct2020	\$ 2,611.05
Petty Cash 01Oct2020	\$ 49.50
TD Canada Trust GIC	\$ 5,434.31
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$8,094.86</b>

#### **INCOME**

GIC Interest	\$ 146.02
Memberships	\$ 20.00
Plant Sales	\$ 1,819.00
Sale Postage Intake	\$ 383.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$2,368.02</b>

#### **EXPENSES**

Rental Fees	(\$ 25.00)
Supplies	(\$ 124.27)
Postage	(\$ 352.43)
Virtual Show Prizes	(\$ 30.00)
Banking Fees	(\$ 33.40)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>(\$ 565.10)</b>

#### **Annual Profit/Loss \$1,802.92**

Bank Balance 30Sept2021	\$ 4,296.55
Outstanding Debt	( 10.00)
Petty Cash 30Sept2021	\$ 20.90
TD Cda Trust GIC (mat. 1May2022)	\$ 1,118.84
TD Cda Trust GIC (mat. 4Jun2022)	\$ 4,461.49
<b>Total Assets 30Sept2020</b>	<b>\$ 9,887.78</b>

*The Iris Standard* is published four (4) times a year, Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. Materials submitted must be received by December 1<sup>st</sup> (Winter), March 1<sup>st</sup> (Spring), June 1<sup>st</sup> (Summer) and September 1<sup>st</sup> (Autumn). Submissions may be edited for style and clarity. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the editor, [oniseditor@gmail.com](mailto:oniseditor@gmail.com).

Title page: TB 'My Generation' Photo: K.Brewitt.