



American Iris Society

Colorado

Region 20

Colorado Hybridizer

A Tribute to Rob Stetson, *page 8*

H.C. Stetson (R.E. Stetson II '03)

Spring 2008



Judges' Training

Lowell Baumunk will hold a one hour judges' training session on Tuesday, June 3, 2008 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in his garden. Questions, e-mail LBaumunk@iriscolorado.com or call 303.908.2450

Iris Sales

Hudson Gardens
Sunday, July 26

Phelan Gardens
Friday, August 2
Saturday, August 3

Pueblo Farm Market
Tuesday, August 5
Friday, August 8

Railroad Park
in Rocky Ford
Saturday, August 9

See Events Calendar, pgs. 6 & 7
for Iris Sale times and locations

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Contact Glenn Guenterberg (editor) or Patrice Van Vleet (design, layout, and production) for ad placement or article submittal information, at clrimage@comcast.net or call us at Clear Images Design & Photography at 303-979-0935. Address: 10387 Totem Run, Littleton, CO 80125-9008.

Non-member newsletter price: \$5



The (Acting) RVP's Spring 2008 Message

By Stephen Blecher

We had good attendance at the Winter General Meeting on Feb 23, where Dave Niswonger was our speaker. He also conducted two hours of judges' training. It appears that the Waring House has had some renovations since our last meeting there, and it turned out to be an excellent meeting site, with plenty of chairs, a microphone, and lots of counter space for serving the food. Our fall General meeting, on the first Saturday in October, will also be held at the Waring House. Now that the Waring House is a good meeting facility, it may be even better than Gates Hall for a group our size. It's cozier than Gates Hall, which is rather cavernous, unless you have 100 people.

The annual meeting of the Botanic Gardens and plant society representatives took place on Tuesday, February 26. Brian Vogt, the Director, unveiled the Master Plan for the Gardens, and it's a complete overhaul, with the first phase being financed with money from the recent bond issue. In addition they are receiving large donations from private sources. They have already installed new lighting and new carpets in Mitchell Hall, so the place is no longer dark and gloomy, and the exhibits will look much more attractive.

The first phase of construction will begin in October of this year. There will be brand-new greenhouses, which will be connected to the Conservatory and open to the public. The parking lot will be replaced with an underground parking garage on the same site, and a pedestrian bridge will be built over York St. A new irrigation system will be built to replace the current system, which was barely functioning. After the first phase, the Waring House will be incorporated into the gardens, the educational programs and exhibit space will be expanded, there will be a bonsai house, an alpine house, and new rose beds. These are just a fraction of the improvements that are planned for the next few years.

There is a temporary down side to all these developments. During 2009 the gardens will become a major construction site. Parking will be scarce and meeting facilities will be limited, but Mitchell Hall will still be available for the Iris Show. By the end of this summer we should know whether any of our meetings will be affected. The Botanic Gardens (DBG) has distributed a list of alternate meeting locations, in case they can't accomodate all the demands for meeting space at DBG.

Today, February 29, is warm and sunny. The snow has just melted off the iris beds, so I think I'll go out to the garden and take a closer look. Thus far the winter was fairly moderate, but the the big snow storms may be ahead of us: we all remember the blizzard in March 2003. My next door neighbor had two huge blue spruces next to our fence, that had to be cut down due to storm damage, but some good came of it. The east side of our lot isn't in total shade anymore, so I have planted several new iris beds.

Sincerely, Stephen Blecher, The (Acting) RVP for Region 20 AIS

Editor's Message

By Glenn Guenterberg



Spring has been slow coming to our garden. But the *reticulatas* in bloom, longer days, and woodpeckers hammering on the chimney are calls to action. It's cleanup time. Time to cut old stalks, pull dried leaves. The tall grasses that stood in snow and wind look weary and are showing green shoots. The iris beds need cleaning and, soon, fertilizer. Moisture has been plentiful. We didn't need to water this winter and until mid March most of the garden was under snow. Which reminds me, Steve Blecher needs your help tuning up the club display bed at Hudson Gardens for a bloom season bonanza. Call him to volunteer.

Thanks to the nine members that tended the Iris Society display at the two-day Echter's Echxpo garden show. The every-other-year event attracted a steady flow of interesting conversations with enthusiastic gardeners.

Several of you contributed wonderfully to the cover article, a memorial to Rob Stetson and the third in the series honoring a Region 20 hybridizer. Many other good articles fill this issue. Read Richard Nolde's adventure in converting his lawn to a stunning, immaculate garden featuring hundreds of iris varieties in beds edged with complementary perennial plantings. And part 12 of Steve Blecher's, A Few Good Irises will convince you to look closely at the fine, hardy irises introduced by our local hybridizers. Learn where to find a Dykes Medal iris garden maintained for 34 years by the Queens of Spades; travel with Bob through the southwest as he visits iris societies from Colorado to California; visits from Larry Lauer and Dave Niswonger; and, well, read all about it for yourself.

This issue is back in print and will later be on the Region 20 Web site. Send us your comments, articles, and announcements by the **fall issue deadline, October 13**. Send event updates anytime for inclusion on the Web site. We want to hear from you!

Announcements

Welcome to Our New Members

We look forward to meeting you, perhaps at our region's next meeting, this year's garden tour, a volunteer work party, the Austin, Texas National Convention, or at one of our iris sales. See the Events Calendar on pages 6 & 7, for dates and times of each of the club's activities.

Seana Ames, from Bennett

Sharon Hargett, from Durango

Tomas Jones, from Denver

Paul Martinez, from Denver

Shirley Ross, from Arvada — congratulations on winning the March Echter's Echxpo raffle contest!



New member Paul Martinez listens to David Niswonger's spuria presentation as Lisa Story, Region 20 secretary, looks on.

A Very Special Thank You to All Who Contributed to This Edition

Without your willingness to share, write articles, and contribute photos, this newsletter would not exist — thank you!

Lowell Baumunk	Catherine Long Gates	Richard Nolde
Stephen Blecher	Jackie Goodwin	Betty Roberts
Lynn Cleveland	Thomas Magee	Grace Syme
Florence Darthenay	Rose McClain	Bob Van Liere
		Jim Weesner

Thank You, Advertisers

Your support is critical to the success of our newsletter!

Iris 4U Iris Garden, Bob Van Liere, page 26

Karen Schultz, The Cat Lady's Garden, page 34

Long's Gardens, Catherine Gates, page 36 & inside back cover

Financials and Board Meetings

If you would like to obtain the 2008 approved operating budget or the financial statement summary, please contact Suzanne McCarthy, the Region 20 treasurer, at hockeynutteh@comcast.net.

If you would like a copy of the board meeting notes, please contact Lisa Story, the Region 20 secretary, at lisarastory@comcast.net.

April 14 – April 19, 2008

Don't Miss Austin's AIS National Convention



Plan Now To Attend Albuquerque's Aril & Median Show

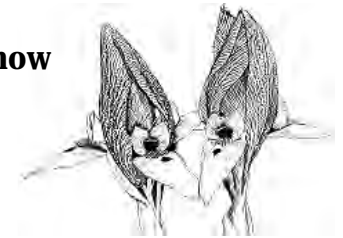
April 27 – 30, 2008

- AIS Aril and Median Show
- Two Days of Garden Tours
- Two Judges' Training Sessions

For information contact Cindy Rivera

at crivera15@comcast.net or at 505-565-8285

Visit <http://www.ariltrek.homestead.com/index.html> for shots of the gardens that will be visited and for additional scheduled events.



Iris acutiloba
by Bob Pries

Cast Your Vote

Vote . . . it's your chance to be counted in the annual popularity pole to determine the top 100 tall bearded irises. Vote before the deadline by marking up to 100 of your favorite irises among the 400+ listed on your official ballot. Then, send it to Region 20 RVP, Steve Blecher for counting. Your Region 20 results will be published in the fall newsletter and will be posted on our Web site, www.geocities.com/aisregion20. They may be a guide to irises that thrive here. National results will appear in the AIS Bulletin and on the AIS Web site, www.irises.org. Symposium ballots will be out in August of 2008.

Consider Giving the Gift of Membership!

Give your gardening friends and family members in Colorado a gift membership in the American Iris Society! They will enjoy the quarterly AIS Bulletin and will automatically become members of Region 20, receiving this newsletter and be invited to our many programs and events.

Annual membership rates are \$25, single; \$30, dual; \$9, youth. Send your check with the recipient's name and address to Tom Gormley, 10606 Timber Ridge St., Dubuque, Iowa 52001-8268. Or contact him at 563-513-0504 or at aimemsec@irises.org

2008 Region 20 Events Calendar

Date	Sponsor	Event (Contacts listed at bottom of page 7)
Sat. Apr 12 12 P.M.	Elmohr Open to public	General Mtg. Rockrimmon brch library, Col. Spr. Speaker: Jim Hedgecock, from Comanche Acres Iris Garden Judges training following meeting
Sat. May 10 12 P.M.	Elmohr Open to public	General Mtg. Rockrimmon brch library, Col. Spr. Speaker: TBD
Sun. May 18 6 A.M. 10 A.M. 1 P.M.	Loomis Open to public	Flower Show , show set up and meet to groom bloom stalk in Gobin Building Judging starts Gobin in Depot Plza, Main St, Rocky Ford
Sat. May 24 8 A.M. – noon	Region 20	Setup & bring material & equip. to store for Sunday's Denver Botanic Garden iris show
Sun. May 25 6:30 – 9:15 A.M. 9:30 – 11:30 A.M. 11:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.	Region 20	Region 20 Iris Show , Mitchell Hall — DBG Receive and place entries Judge entries Open to the public
Sat. May 31 9 A.M.	Region 20	Garden Tour meet in Steve Blecher's garden, at 1309 W. Ridge Rd, Littleton, & continue with 3 more beautiful gardens.
Tue. Jun 3 6:30 – 7:30 P.M.	Region 20	Judges' Training , in Lowell Baumunk's garden. For questions call 303-908-2450 or e-mail LBaumunk@iriscolorado.com
Sat. Jun 7 8 – 10:30 A.M. 10:30 A.M. – 12 P.M. 12 – 6 P.M.	Elmohr Open to public	Elmohr Iris Show , at the Citadel Mall Show setup & receive entries Judge entries at 750 Citadel Dr. East, Col. Spr.
Fri. Jul 25 1 – 4 P.M.	Region 20	Iris Sale setup at Hudson Gardens
Sat. Jul 26 9 A.M. – 4 P.M.	Region 20 Open to public	Iris Sale at Hudson Gardens Setup from 7 – 8:30 A.M., before opening
Fri. Aug 2 10 A.M. – 4 P.M.	Elmohr	Elmohr Iris Rhizome Sale Location: Phelan Gardens, 4955 Austin Bluffs Parkway, Colorado Springs, CO
Sat. Aug 3 11 A.M. – 3 P.M.		Open to the public both days.

2008 Region 20 Events Calendar, *continued*

Date	Sponsor	Event (Contacts listed at bottom of page)
Tue. Aug 5 7 A.M. – 12 P.M.	Loomis	Loomis Plant Sale at the Pueblo Farm Market at Midtown Mall, in Pueblo Open to the public
Fri. Aug 8 7 A.M. – 12 P.M.	Loomis	Loomis Plant Sale at the Pueblo Farm Market at Midtown Mall, in Pueblo Open to the public
Sat. Aug 9 8 A.M. – 12 P.M.	Loomis	Plant Sale , Railroad Park in Rocky Ford Open to the public
Sat. Aug 9 12 P.M.	Elmohr	Elmohr Potluck Meeting , Speaker: TBD Location: Jackie Goodwin's Home
Sat. Aug 9	Region 20	Board Meeting , location & time TBD
Sat. Sep 13 12 P.M.	Elmohr	Elmohr's Awards Banquet , Location: TBD
Sat. Oct 4 12 P.M.	Region 20	Fall General Meeting and Election , Waring House, Speaker: TBD
Sun. Oct 12 6 P.M.	Loomis	Loomis Awards Dinner at the Heritage Center
Sat. Nov 22 1 P.M.	Region 20	Board Meeting at DBG, TBD classroom

We need your help! Please volunteer now for the Hudson Gardens display bed cleanup. Contact Steve Blecher (see below) for dates and times.



Event-Related Contacts

Region 20 questions, contact Stephen Blecher, **303-798-9103**
Iris Garden Tour – May 31, 2008, Lisa Story, **303-233-8354**
Elmohr questions, call Jackie Goodwin, **719-630-0595**
Elmohr's Loomis Test Garden, Russ Eacker, **719-633-5193**
Loomis questions, contact Rose McClain, **719-254-3462**

A Tribute To Rob Stetson

By Many of Rob's Friends — Thanks to All of You.



My Friend, Rob — *By Jim Weesner*

Thanks for giving me an opportunity to thank Rob for all the things he introduced me to over the forty years I knew him. I have sat here trying to write something but I still haven't gotten over the loss of not being able to get on the phone and ask him some stupid question that I've probably asked several times before. His reaction was always the same, a patient answer that was probably more information than you thought you needed. I had never seen the value of gardening until five years ago when I moved onto the place where I live now. I called him to tell him about having a place to work on motorcycles (another hobby and occupation that we started together in the '60s). His response was to ask about the landscape and plants. The next thing I know, I get a package of some irises that he was working on. He asked me to see how they grew in this area and the rest is history. I now spend more time weeding and working on the flower beds that I put in than the motorcycles that have grown roots in the shop. I don't really expect you to put this in the newsletter but I would appreciate a copy to read. I hope you've gotten up to Swallow Hill for some of their concerts. They have had several that I would like to have seen. Thanks.

Jim Weesner is a friend from way back – the Army, trips to Europe, time shared here. He lives in Nebraska and often drove to Denver to visit Rob and to attend concerts. We gave him some rhizomes of H.C. Stetson and other plants for his garden when he visited last summer. Swallow Hill is a local folk music venue in Englewood that Rob and Jim enjoyed. GG

I Remember Rob — *By Betty Roberts*

Rob Stetson was a kind and gentle soul who left an indelible mark on Region 20. His love for irises was contagious, and he lent his time to chairing two annual iris shows for more years than I can remember. He was quick to respond to serving on the By-Laws Revision Committee, and I can still see him sitting in my living room offering sound advice. Rob's passing has left a void, but he remains in our minds and spirits and for this we are grateful. Thanks, Rob, for giving so freely of your knowledge, your time, your efforts, your enthusiasm, and your ever-present love and kindness.

Rob Stetson — *By Tom Magee*

I first met Rob Stetson on tour in Jack Durrance's garden. He was a regular on tour after that, often coming alone to visit my garden. He took pride in seeing initial bloom of later introduced irises.

His garden was on tour at the '98 Denver National Convention. Irises were planted throughout the yard including the strip at the street. He had raised beds for arils and a hot spot against the south wall of his house for spuria. I envied the large planting of hollyhocks at the rear as I'd not been successful with them in mine.

His most notable introduction was tall bearded H.C. Stetson, named for his grandfather, which got a start winning awards in Europe.

We had conversations about heart operations. He'd had several replacing a heart valve, finally using a pig valve to last a lifetime.

His most appreciated contribution to Region 20 was his years chairing successful shows.

Memories of My Dear Friend Rob — *By Florence Darthenay*



I have just reviewed some of my photos and am sending some that illustrate the sides I was able to see of Rob.

Rob loved animals. He was very attentive to his natural environment and to all of its inhabitants.

He would recognize and name a bird by its way of flying. He had for long years a faithful German Shepard called JD, standing for Just Dog. Because, if Rob had the gift to understand and analyse complex and subtle situations, he was also able to make them simple and preferred them so.

His military service had him travel to Europe. He went to visit Paris, where he first arrived on a July 14th (the French equivalent of July 4th in the USA). He would walk the streets of the city, eventually ended playing some guitar along the Seine River, and even made some money. He would remember this talent later on when the war was over, and would play in a Denver club with other musician friends.

Like his father, he traveled in many countries in Europe, but also in Asia. He enjoyed most of all traveling by train.



His strong physical constitution allowed him to pursue his various hobbies, including gardening, even after retiring. In Paris, during a 2005 spring visit to the gardens where the Franciris competition is organized, in Tecomah close to Paris, Rob is joined in the iris garden by Mrs. Anne-Marie-Chesnais and Mr. Philippe Marqueyssat.



Rob had diverse hobbies, each of them pushed as far as possible, before passing to another hobby. You have the confirmation by a French palate that he was a very good cook, very cautious and knowledgeable about the ingredients used. One of his favorite places in Paris was Angelina's, where we would go and be served the best hot chocolate (said with only little chauvinism), with a meringue pastry called the Montblanc.

Others will tell you better than I can about his passion and involvement in the world of irises. I knew he insisted on having his seedlings tried in different places of the world and under different climates before introduction, to offer not only delicate and unique irises, but also really strong plants, which would give happy owners satisfaction whatever the latitude of the garden.

He liked to remind his friends he had been a motor-head, passionate about engines, motorbikes, and airplanes. We once visited Le Bourget museum of aircraft and space, and, between two detailed explanations of the different airplanes we were seeing, he would confess how he still regretted never having had the possibility to have flown on the Concorde.

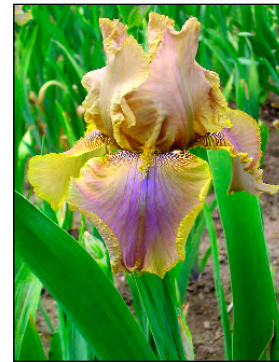
His military career had an impact upon his whole life; like his father who served in WWII, Rob and his brother served in Vietnam. He once asked me to go to visit the beaches in Normandy.



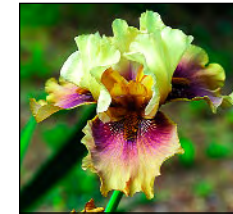
*Arromanches
Normandy, France*

I think it is true that all people who met Rob and got to know him a little were impressed by the amount

Non-introduced Irises Hybridized by Rob Stetson



'Tumbleweed Waltz,' photo provided by B. Van Liere.



Seedling #TB94G1, taken in the Florence Iris Garden in 2006, by G. Guentenberg.



'Debra T.' (was seedling # TB95K3), photo taken in Hudson Gardens.

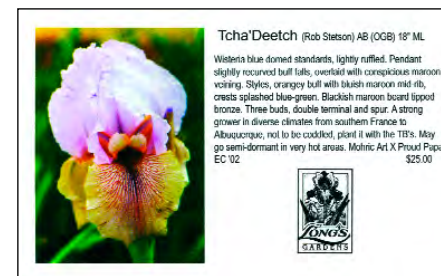
'Archangel Wings,' photo provided by Long's Gardens



'Finnigan's Finagling Factor,' photo provided by Long's Gardens.

Rob Stetson's Introduced Irises

'H.C. Stetson,' in the Iris Garden in Florence. Taken by G. Guentenberg in May 2005.



Tcha'Deetch (Rob Stetson) AB (OGB) 18" ML
 Wisteria blue domed standards, lightly ruffled. Pendant slightly recurved buff falls, overlaid with conspicuous maroon veining. Styles, orange buff with tawny maroon mid rib, crests splashed blue-green. Blackish maroon beard tipped bronze. Three buds, double terminal and spur. A strong grower in diverse climates from southern France to Albuquerque, not to be confused, plant it with the TB's. May go semi-dormant in very hot areas. *Mother: Art X Proud Papa EC '02* \$25.00



Friends attending Rob's memorial service at Bonnie Brae Park in August, 2007.





Once the Medici dukes' residence, the Palazzo Vecchio (Italian for old palace) is now the town hall of Florence, Italy.



The awards ceremony, complete with trumpet fanfare, is held in the historic Palazzo Vecchio's Sala dei Duecento. Everything about the event exudes old world charm and dignity. The fleur-de-lis, on the flag bearer's banner, is the emblem of the city of Florence and used on its coat of arms.



Off the Piazza Michelangelo lies the garden dedicated to the iris, the symbol of Florence. The garden, nestled between olive trees, slopes down toward the Arno River. It is in this garden where the annual Concorso Internazionale dell'Iris is held and where Rob Stetson won the first prize, the Premio Firenze, for 'H.C. Stetson' in 2001.

of knowledge, detail, and precision he would give to his interest. He would put all his soul to the goal he had fixed himself. This may be why he still seems so alive now in the heart of his friends.

Bonsoir to my friends in Colorado. With Friendship and sincerity, Florence.

Florence Darthenay, a close friend of Rob's, lives in Paris, France, is an iris enthusiast, and works for a major U.S. firm. She has visited the U.S. often and attended the 2006 AIS Convention in Portland, OR. She enjoys European iris events and this spring plans to attend the International Iris Competition, the Concorso Internazionale dell'Iris, in Florence, Italy. For an interesting history of the Florentine Iris Show and the Primio Firenze, which Rob's 'H.C. Stetson' won, see the A Half Century or More article on pages 17 and 18. Pictured left is the iris garden in recent times. Photos of Rob, on pages 9 and 10, were taken by Florence. GG

Rob Stetson: Iris Plantsman — By Lowell Baumunk

I first saw Rob at Dr. Durrance's garden during a Region 20 garden tour in the early nineties. It was apparent that he, on his motorcycle and with his shaggy extra-casual look and demeanor, was not a typical irisarian. When I had a chance to speak with him a couple of times over the next year, I could tell that he had a special interest in irises, that he wanted to know all there was to know about them and that he was quick to learn.

Like many of us who have a strong interest in growing plants, Rob inherited his enthusiasm for gardening. His grandfather, H.C. Stetson, had an impressive collection of irises at his South Denver garden. Those irises made an impression that resurfaced as a passionate interest for Rob when he was in his forties.

Hybridizing TBs — Rob's huge hybridizing achievement was the winning of the 'Premio Firenze' in the prestigious iris competition held every year in Florence. The iris was 'H.C. Stetson,' a cross of 'Art School Angel' X 'Elizabeth Poldark.' 'H.C. Stetson' is a very ruffled and nicely formed very light pink blending to white and with light blue beards. A very pretty iris. (Photos of the location of the annual ceremony and of Rob's winning iris were taken during a visit in Florence by the editor in 2006.)

'Tumbleweed Waltz,' (pictured on page 11) is another interesting Stetson tall bearded. It created quite a sensation when Rob exhibited it in the seedling class at two or three shows. 'Tumbleweed Waltz' produced amazing stalks. They were strong, tall, many-branched and held an incredible number of buds. No one thought the flowers were the prettiest ever seen, but it won Rob a couple of "Best Seedling" awards nonetheless.

'Finnigan's Finagling Factor,' (pictured on page 11) a neglecta with flounces, won notoriety in a French competition by growing several inches taller than any other irises in the display bed.

Arils and Arilbreds — Rob had a special enthusiasm for aril and arilbred irises. He was one of the disappearing breed of gardeners who relish a challenge, and the pure arils do present a challenge. Rob accumulated an impressive collection of arils and grew them well in a raised sand bed of his own design.

He read all there is to read about arils and arilbreds and made contact with the experts. He spoke on the telephone with Sharon McAllister frequently. He made a trip to Europe at bloom time and visited the gardens of arilbred hybridizers Harald Mathes, Geoff Wilson, and Lawrence Ransom. He also met German iris enthusiasts Gisela and Wolfgang Dathe, British gardener Tim Loe, Tony Hall (the renowned plantsman of Kew Gardens), and attended the Florence Iris Competition.

Rob served on the Board of Directors on the Aril Society International and for several years was the Plant Sale Co-Chairman, being responsible for the mailing of the irises. He made a few trips to Albuquerque to judge the Albuquerque Aril Society's show. Rob's enthusiasm for the arils is reflected in his choice of the e-mail moniker "Arilianrob."

In Region 20 — Rob had served as a Director of Region 20, the Colorado section of the American Iris Society, and was the chairman of the annual show for many years. He was the featured speaker at a meeting and gave an excellent slide show of his iris trip to Europe.

I never knew Rob to express a negative attitude or to speak a negative thought about another person. I admired his active mind and wide-ranging interests.

Rob Stetson: Gardener — *By Stephen Blecher*

The year 2000 was a banner year for Rob Stetson's garden. At that time he was the Sale Chairman for the Aril Society International, and his whole garden was filled with clumps of arilbred irises of all shapes, sizes, and colors. There was a strip of land between the sidewalk and curb that was filled with irises too, a mixture of arilbreds and his own seedlings. There was a nice clump of pale pink, ruffled irises identified with a seedling number, that was later named H. C. Stetson. He also had a sand bed at the back of his garden that he used for growing pure aril irises. Most of the arilbred plants were identified by seedling numbers, so I have no idea how many of them were later introduced. I assume that at

least some of them were introduced, because all the leading arilbred hybridizers were represented. I visited his garden at least four times that season to photograph his arilbred collection, and also got a few pictures of pure aril irises. As far as I know, Lowell Baumunk is the only one in Colorado who's now growing pure aril irises. There are a number of different aril species, all of which are very exotic-looking.



A Memorial Service — In Denver, August 2007

By Glenn Guenterberg

It was a clear, hot, Saturday. A crowd met in Bonnie Brae Park to celebrate. They came from all over: Denver, Nebraska, France and from all eras: high school, the Vietnam and Europe years, best friends new and old, motor riders, relatives, and iris gardeners. There was music, of course. Three old young guys played

a violin and guitars and sang and reminisced — Rob had been part of the folk music scene off and on since the early '60s at places like the Exodus in downtown Denver. One of the players was Harry Tuft, owner of the Denver Folklore Center and founder of Swallow Hill in Englewood. Harry Tuft has been a friend and mentor to many folk performers and his place is still a hangout for new and famous artists — the likes of Utah Phillips, Tom Paxton, Judy Collins, Joan Baez, and Nick Forster have come through. So, like his other interests, Rob had plunged into guitar playing. Several people talked about his life and interests. The list was long. Rock hounding for topaz, model airplanes, home brewing, zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance, racing, beer steins on eBay, wild mushrooms, bee keeping, touring Europe, heart valve replacement – twice, cooking good food, home made



cider, planting hollyhocks along the alley to beautify the neighborhood, and irises. There were more that I have forgotten. Someone summed it up with a quote from Rob, "Something will find me. What next? I don't know."





Jane, a friend, recalled a 1968 road trip when Rob had just returned from Vietnam. They drove to Huston to get a motorcycle but instead got a Texas speeding ticket that required a \$20 payment to avoid a stay in jail. With no cash, at least not \$20, she found the local priest who fronted the bail money. Recalling those days, her advice was, “Act on your feelings. Don’t wait.”

Toward the end of the afternoon, the young old guys sang the Tom Paxton song, Ramblin’ Boy. The music seemed especially appropriate. The words go like this —

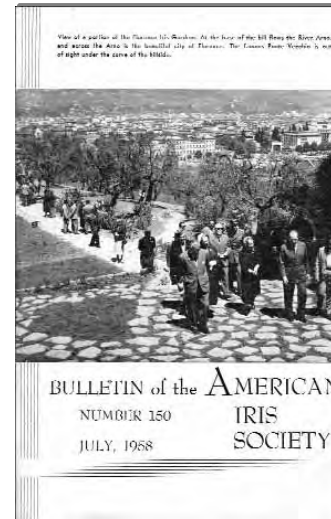
He was a man and a friend always
 He stuck with me in the hard old days.
 He never cared if I had no dough
 We rambled ‘round in the rain and snow.
 And here’s to you my ramblin’ boy
 May all your ramblin’ bring you joy
 And here’s to you my ramblin’ boy
 May all your ramblin’ bring you joy.
 He left me here, to ramble on
 My ramblin’ pal, is dead and gone
 If when we die, we go somewhere
 I’ll bet you a dollar, he’s ramblin’ there.

Amen



A Half Century or More Golden Florin Celebrates Golden Anniversary

By Catherine Long Gates



View of a path in the Florence Hill Garden. At the foot of the hill flows the River Arno, and across the river is the beautiful city of Florence. The Lunari Stone Fountain is one of eight under the name of the hillside.

BULLETIN of the AMERICAN
 NUMBER 150 IRIS
 JULY, 1968 SOCIETY

High above the Arno

River perch the iris contestants vying for the golden Florin, the top award in the Concorso Internazionale dell’Iris. The award is based on the gold coin, the golden florin, which was first introduced in 1252 and continued to be struck until 1523. It became the dominant trade coin in Western Europe during that time. One side featured the fleur-de-lis design, which is the emblem of the city of Florence. The Florentine version of the fleur-de-lis is more ornate than most other designs and always has the stamens posed between the petals. The irises that

are sent from around the world to compete for the florin are planted in artfully laid out beds amongst olive trees and joined by winding stone paths. These colorful international visitors have graced the hillside in Florence Italy for over 50 years.

The garden was officially inaugurated in May 1957 (see page 12 for modern-day views of the garden), but the awarding of the first Premio Firenze was postponed until 1958. Why?

The weather, of course. An extremely severe winter in 1955-1956 had set the plants back so they were given an extra year to recover. This first group of contestants consisted of 67 varieties from 20 hybridizers representing seven countries. Contestants then, as now, are coded by number so that it is truly a “blind judging” by an international team of judges. ‘Rehobeth,’ from American hybridizer Fred DeForest, was the first winner of the Premio Firenze.



MISS (MRS) [REDACTED] of Florence, the first iris to win the golden Florin of Florence. Queen Helen of Romania is admiring the substance of this contesting variety. With her © Mrs. H. Carlin Fletcher. Photo by Peter Long.

The awards ceremony is held in the historic Palazzo Vecchio's Sala dei Duecento complete with trumpet fanfare (pictured on page 12). Everything about the event exudes old world charm and dignity. Fast forward nearly 50 years — the gardens and awards ceremony have changed very little. The iris contestants have gotten bigger, more ruffled, and more amazing in coloration. American bred iris have often captured the top prize. In 2001 the first prize, the Premio Firenze, was awarded for the first time to an iris born and bred in Colorado, 'H.C. Stetson.' Hybridizer Rob Stetson named this very pale pink and highly ruffled tall bearded after his grandfather, an accomplished gardener who had inspired Rob's love of irises. Rob was able to visit Florence after 2001 and see his highly decorated iris (it also won third prize in the German Iris Society competition in Frankfurt) in this magnificent setting. Rob's death in 2007 cut short a promising hybridizing career, but his accomplishments were many. During his relatively brief foray at iris hybridizing Rob Stetson truly brought home the gold!

A footnote from Cathering Long Gates: Just for clarification. We introduced 'H.C. Stetson' and 'Tcha'Deetch in 2003.' To the best of my knowledge none of his other irises have been formally introduced. Evidently because there was some confusion about their status some of his varieties have been "de facto" introduced by being offered for sale.

Oscar's Wonderful Iris Patch, or 55 Years in a Missouri Garden

By Glenn Guenterberg and Richard Nolde

Who's Oscar? You know if you attended the Region 20 winter meeting in February with 35 other members. His casual ramble was a delightful combination of homespun humor and serious talk about iris culture built on an education in chemistry and biology. His day job for years was hospital administrator but his love still is science at work in down-to-Earth gardening. (Oscar) Dave Niswonger started his iris career in 1953, made his first cross in 1954, and is still at it. A lot happened in between: the only Dykes Medal for a Border Bearded iris ('Brown Lasso'), Siberian irises, acclaimed bearded irises of many sizes, and spurias awarded nine Nies Medals. His stories recalled the wild adventures of Jesse James and Ed



O'Kelly in Colorado and near his family's farm in Missouri. On the serious side, he said a lifetime of crosses guided by science and intuition may not be enough to reach an objective — he has worked almost that long (38 years) to get a pure pink amoena iris. 'Sunset Snows' produced in 1965 by the prolific New Zealand hybridizer, Jean Stevens is close but there is still a hint of pink in the standards. "The Lord willing and the creek don't rise," Dave will do it.

The 1967 convention irises were trashed by hail but the trip was saved by a visit to Long's Gardens where some of his seedlings were growing. Visitors to the garden asked when he would be introducing one of his unnamed seedlings. In response to their requests and money offered that day, he introduced his first iris through Long's the next year as 'Safire Fudge.' Later, 'Brown Lasso,' his Dykes Medal winner, resulted from his rescuing seedlings from Gene Buckles' estate and introducing one of the best.

His talk was, "New Colors in Tall Bearded Irises." In 1890, people thought there were no more colors to be found in wild irises. These were mostly diploids. As plant hybridization progressed, it was learned that Iris mesopotamia, from Turkey, could convert carotene pigment (yellow) to lycopene (red). Three pigments are known to control iris color: carotene in the cell nucleus, lycopene in the sap around cell walls, and anthocyanin. Flavescentes can mask and modify the pigments. Now we think it will be possible to produce a true red iris. Lycopene, the pigment in red tomatoes, may be insufficient by itself to produce true red; there may need to be a mutation to remove competing pigments.

An approach to genetically modify nearly red irises could involve introducing a gene from another plant, perhaps red algae, into a culture of cells from the iris and growing a plant with the modified gene from this material. He described this as shooting a shotgun shell full of algae into a paste of iris cells with the hope that the algae would penetrate the iris cell nuclei. Genetic manipulation by explosive impact seemed only partly tongue in cheek. Don't try it at home.

Dave's judges' training session was about Spuria irises. Here are reasons to try them in your garden: Spurias come in more flower forms than tall



bearded irises; they like alkaline soil (ours); they grow in dry mountainous regions but do well in wetter soil; they can be mulched to conserve water (but do not leave mulch against the stalks); they bloom later, so are good for areas with late frosts; they form a striking backdrop to a perennial border; the blooms are sturdy, can be cut early, and refrigerated to open when warmed; and they hardly ever need to be divided.



Larry Lauer Comes To Colorado For A Day

By Grace Syme

Larry Lauer, speaker for the Elmoir Iris Society March meeting, is like many of us. His grandmother raised irises and he learned to grow vegetables and irises from her. They moved to Sacramento, California in 1975 where their neighbor, Jim, from Cottage Gardens gave leftover irises to him and taught him about hybridizing. He came down with the disease after being bit with the Iris Bug. Watch out! I have heard that it is going around Colorado too.

In 1985 he attended his first regional iris club meeting in San Jose, California. That was the year he made his first cross. Things change. His 'He Man Pop' won the prestigious Sass Medal. His friend Jim moved to Keith Keppel's old place.

Larry became a garden judge in 1989 but he loves hybridizing most of all. He likes to create lined and speckled iris; re-bloomers too — a double treat. When you call him, he will probably be in his garden. I hope to see his generous gifts of door-prize rhizomes blooming in your gardens next year.

Things are changing again. With his planned move to Oregon, we should give him a big order for the varieties we liked from his slide show. Things happen in moves, so now is the time to order. Some of us bought his color catalog with that idea in mind. You can reach him at Lauer's Flowers, P.O. Box 789, Wilton, CA 95693, LauersIris@Frontiernet.net or at (916)687-6143 We wish him well!

Editor's Note: Grace Syme has a delightful sense of humor. She is the Elmoir Iris Society vice president and show director and she wears wonderful, large gardening hats.



Somewhere, Over the Rainbow A Story In Two Parts

By Richard Nolde

Irises are said to be named after Iris, the goddess of the rainbow in classical mythology. In May, I will open my windows and look down on a splendid display of irises. The sweetest of fragrances float up to me from a bed of irises of all varieties and colors. The rainbow that is painted in my garden lasts a lot longer than the evanescent colors produced by sunlight refracted through droplets of moisture that give us the name of my favorite flower.

Spring is around the corner and for those of us who work indoors, cabin fever is at its peak. Every warm, sunny day cries out for an escape to the yard to poke around and see if anything is growing yet. Has the ground thawed? Are the tulips and jonquils poking through the mulch? Did the irises survive the load of snow piled on them when shoveling the driveway and have they started to put out new growth? Is it time to clean up the dead leaves and shriveled foliage clinging to the remains of last year's plants? With much anticipation of the flowers soon to burst forth, I thought I would reflect on my experiences converting my typical suburban lawn to a garden that contains over three hundred varieties of irises and other plants. Experienced iris-growers may find my experience atypical or my advice absurd. If you decide to follow any of my suggestions, don't complain if your prized \$60.00 first year introduction doesn't survive. I'm only reporting what has worked for me. Be forewarned that I have a penchant for being a little obstinate and wanting to buck the conventional wisdom. As the saying goes, your mileage may vary.

In a previous article in this newsletter, I have written of how I began with a small gift of irises from a friend's wife and a large box of free irises picked up from the side of the road. The fact that lawnmowers and I seem to have a less-than-amicable relationship and that the drought of several years ago made a typical bluegrass lawn seem an extravagant waste of a precious resource and an unnecessary drain on my pocket book certainly encouraged me to experiment with flowers that were well adapted to this climate and required little maintenance. I didn't know anything about growing irises at first and even less about how many varieties and colors are available from a multitude of growers and suppliers today. As they say, I just made things up as I went along and tried to learn from my mistakes. I also like to collect books on irises and seek out information about irises wherever I can find it. Thus far, the successes

outnumber the mistakes and my results have not disappointed me, so I am inclined to continue to experiment.

Over the last few years, I've learned that some of the things I have done run counter to the conventional wisdom on growing irises, at least as widely published. If you don't take into consideration the fact that Colorado does not receive the same amount of moisture and sunlight as Virginia or Missouri, your reading of the mainstream literature could lead you astray. It is a cardinal rule that you don't mulch irises because it can cause the rhizomes to rot if moisture is trapped against them during wetter periods. I have heard tales of my friends back East losing half their rhizomes in a particularly damp spring even without mulching their irises. They get thirty-five or more inches of rain each year and it can be cloudy for days at a time. Along the Front Range, we get fifteen to eighteen inches of rain and it is rare to have more than a few days in a row without seeing the sun, which can be very intense even in winter. I dislike weeding about as much as mowing the lawn so I decided that I would try mulching my irises to see if it would keep the weeds at bay. My neighbor used medium-size pine bark mulch on his flower beds with good results, so I decided to share a truckload with him one year and see what would happen.

The first year, with the irises planted in freshly turned soil, I applied the bark mulch lightly and it did not stop the weeds entirely. When no mass die-off of irises could be discerned, I piled the mulch on a little thicker the next year and the weeds were held substantially at bay even though I do not use any weed killer on my iris beds. In the third year, just before removing the irises from that bed to divide them, I detected only three weeds in a bed that measured eight feet by twenty feet. One caveat is worth mentioning here. You must apply the mulch before the weeds come up the first year and it needs to be thick enough to keep the weed seeds from reaching the dirt. If the soil has a lot of clay and cracks when it dries out, woe be unto the gardener that lets the weeds produce seeds that will drop into the cracks. Last year when I reworked a bed in the back yard, now also given over to irises, I made the mistake of not ordering the mulch until mid summer. The weeds took hold with a vengeance and I did not manage to regain the upper hand before frost killed them off in the fall.

This year, I have a large pile of mulch waiting to be distributed as soon as I have cleaned the flower beds this spring. Having just recently cleaned and checked the irises in my garden, I continue to observe a limited number of instances of rot and there is no significant difference between

areas that were heavily mulched or lightly mulched. The depth at which the rhizome was planted seems to be more indicative of rot than the thickness of the mulch piled on the ground above it. Rot seems to be a danger only where the soil formed a depression around the rhizome and water collected during the winter.

Some people are not thrilled about the appearance of the brown bark mulch during the long winter when no irises are putting out new leaves. I plant tulips along the front edge of each bed so that there will be some early greenery and flowers while the irises are emerging from their winter nap. I am also experimenting with growing creeping thyme of various low-growing varieties between the irises to see if this will work as a replacement for the bark mulch. I've grown it among other flowers successfully and found the varieties that seem to stay closest to the ground and do not make too thick a mat with the assumption that these will offer the same benefits as mulch without taking too many nutrients from the irises or shading them too much. Since this will be my first season since planting the thyme between the plants, I do not have any results to report yet. I have also planted beds of Agastache and blue flax in front of the main iris beds to provide a screen once the irises have finished blooming.

Raised beds are often touted as a way to ensure adequate drainage for your irises, particularly if you have a lot of clay in your soil. I have creat-

ed terraced beds in my front yard and raised beds in my back yard that have between two and eight inches of relief above the paths between them. I don't see any marked differences in the results and the only times I have lost rhizomes to rot was when I watered exces-



sively thinking that the freshly planted irises needed the extra water. For the most part, unless we have a prolonged dry spell of more than a couple of weeks without any rain, I don't water at all. I find that the irises tolerate the dryness about as well or better than any other plants in my garden and I am happy to report that I have much lower water bills than any of my neighbors. However, being too stingy with the water can be an impediment to a good show of blooms and there is no doubt that the chances of getting a second bloom on the remontant irises will not be as good if you do not keep them well watered. By chance, I have

noticed that running my rows perpendicular to the prevailing winds causes extra snow to pile up in the sunken paths between the rows and keeps it from melting as quickly.

If you want to try something very different, bury perforated drain pipes under your rows or at the edges of the paths in a network that you can feed from a spigot or other water source. I dig the pipes in below the paths and lay them on a bed of gravel. You can cover the pipe with a layer of landscape fabric before you put the dirt on top of it and this will keep the holes from clogging up over time. At the end of the row, add an elbow and a short vertical section with a threaded union on the end. When it is time to water, connect the hose to the vertical riser at the end of the run and the water will go directly to the subsoil where the roots are waiting for it. This avoids getting water on the leaves and rhizomes and evaporation is completely eliminated. With a good layer of mulch on the top, the soil can be moist several inches down even when the surface appears dried out. Should you decide to try this system, make an accurate drawing of your pipe layout with good references or you can destroy it the first time you dig up a bed to transplant your irises. Tillers do not distinguish between tree roots and plastic drain pipes but once you run through a line, you won't forget how much harder it is to patch a line in place than it was to lay it originally.

Micro-climates can produce different bloom times or extend your bloom period. When I started growing irises, all my beds were in the front of my house facing east. These beds are warmed by the morning sun which also reflects off the house and is absorbed by the concrete sidewalk and driveway. The dark brown pine bark mulch also absorbs more radiant energy than it reflects. I noticed that my neighbor had irises blooming two weeks before mine, but her irises were planted in a bed next to a south-facing brick wall. When I built a low rock-faced wall along the end of my yard and planted dwarf irises in front of it, they began to bloom two weeks before the irises in the main beds.

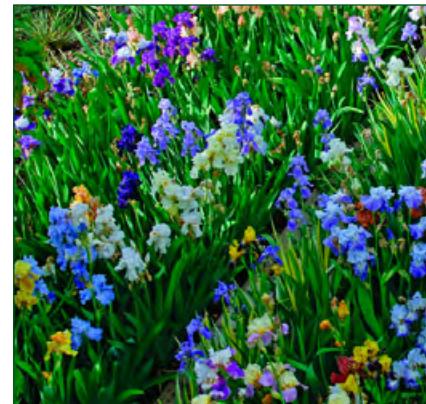
To be continued . . .

Look for part two of Richard's article in the fall newsletter.

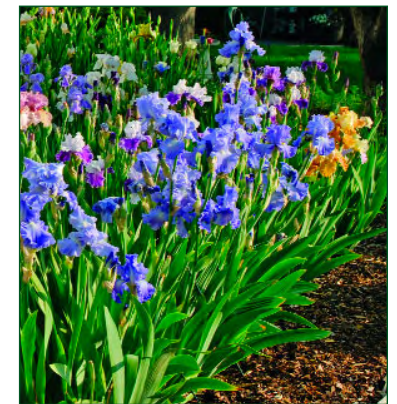
Editor's Note: Richard gardens in Littleton and is Region 20's webmaster. His beautiful gardens cover most of the available land around his house; not much grass remains.



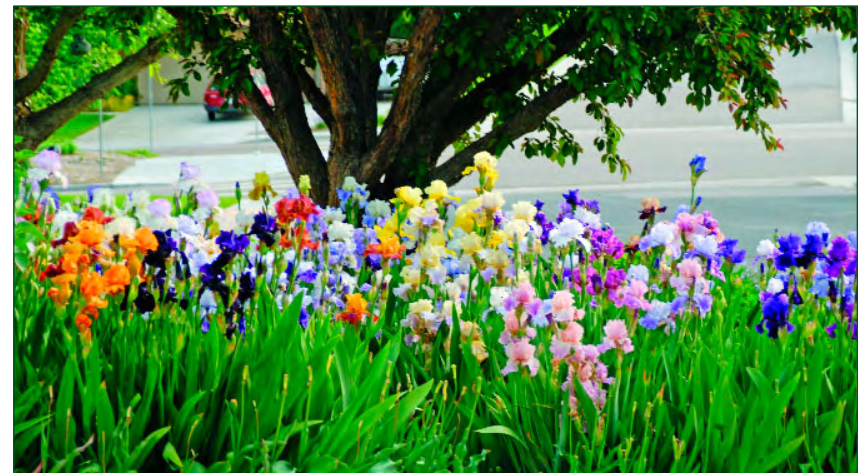
Richard created raised beds with mulch surrounding irises and other plants.



Richard's view over the iris rainbow!



Mulch between the iris beds.



Richard's front yard iris garden.

All article photos by Richard Nolde.

Iris 4 U



Iris Garden

*"Growing and Hybridizing Tall Bearded Iris for Beauty,
Performance, and your Pleasure."*



Crooked Little Smile

There was a Crooked Man

There was a crooked man and he walked a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence upon a crooked stile.
He bought a crooked cat, which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.

In his crooked garden he planted crooked rows.
Then he turned the water on and used a crooked hose.
What caused a crooked smile upon his crooked face?
The crooked flowers blooming brought beauty to your place.

British Nursery Rhyme Revised by Elizabeth Van Liere

Bob Van Liere
2700 W. Amherst Ave.
Denver, CO 80236

www.iris4u.com
iris4u2@comcast.net
Tel: 303-789-4747

View ALL 2008 and previous years introductions at
www.iris4u.com



Bob lunching with the Prescott Iris Society.

Iris Travels

By Bob Van Liere

February for most is the Month for Lovers but as it turned out, this year it's been a month for iris presentations for this Iris Lover.

My wife and I left Denver in January for Tucson, Arizona. We met with a small group from the Tucson Iris Society to have lunch and talk irises and hybridizing. Afterward we toured Peggi Ishman's garden. She had a couple of irises in bloom with more getting ready.

From there we drove to California for some rest and relaxation. Early in February I was privileged to give a talk to the San Fernando Iris Society and show photos of my hybridizing efforts. Then, it was on to help the San Diego Iris Society celebrate their 45th anniversary. I put together a dozen or so photos of irises with a birthday theme that celebrated the region's accomplishments such as 'Announcement,' 'Drum Roll,' and 'Cast of Characters,' along with photos of our garden, seedlings, and some of our introductions.

We took a break, getting our iris fix by visiting Carole and Paul Buchheim's Mystic Lake Iris Garden. As always they have dozens of irises in bloom no matter what time of year. We helped them plant a few irises and transplanted my 23BT22 seedling. It won best out-of-region seedling at the Region 15 Spring Regional in 2007. Carole continued growing the plants I had sent in 2006 with the goal of getting more increases than possible in Colorado. We hope to introduce it in 2009 or 2010. We're leaning toward naming it 'Stars and Stripes Forever' because of the red, white, and blue beard and horn. Suggestions are welcome. Forward the names to Iris 4U Iris Garden at iris4u2@comcast.net. If we choose your name, we will send you the introduction as a thank you.

Later that month we attended a presentation given by Brad Kasperek of Zebra Gardens to the Inland Iris Society in Riverside, California. On our way home, we stopped in Arizona to give a presentation to the Prescott Iris Society. Several former Coloradoans we met had not known about Region 20 or our Society while they lived here.

Extend the hand of friendship at every opportunity to those who love to garden; they may join the Region 20 Iris Society. Iris Lovers are always great to get to know and become friends with.

A Few Good Irises, *Part 12* Support Your Local Hybridizers

By *Stephen Blecher*

For well over 60 years Colorado has been home to some talented iris hybridizers, who have introduced cultivars that have received national and international recognition. Some of these people are no longer with us, but their plants live on. This group includes Dr. John Durrance, Ray Lyon, Joe Hoage, Harry Kuesel, and Rob Stetson. I probably missed some names, because there were others who came before them. Most of the introductions from these five gentlemen are no longer available nationally, but many of them can be found at local commercial gardens, iris rhizome sales, and private gardens.

Most of the cultivars from Lyon, Durrance, Kuesel, and Hoage have been around for 10 or 20 years, but a lot of them still have modern form, plus unique patterns and colors. They include both tall bearded and median irises that make an excellent display from the beginning to the end of the bloom season.

Among the active hybridizers, Tom Magee is the senior member of the group. His most famous introduction is 'Acoma,' which is still widely available, and his border bearded iris, 'Lemon Up,' won the Knowlton Medal in 2004. 'Bolder Boulder' (TB) is a reliable re-bloomer, and one of my favorites is 'Sky Rain,' a big fancy plicata.

Dave Miller has been introducing irises for about 12 years, and he is best known for his ongoing series of blue-bearded white TB irises, but he has introduced excellent examples of several other colors, plus some very prolific standard dwarfs.

Lois Olson has been hybridizing for a number of years, but working on a small scale, introducing a few varieties per year. 'Tinnabulation,' a ruffled light violet is the best known, and among her more recent introductions, 'Windswept Heights' and 'Burning Blue' are very attractive.

Jerry Hall hybridizes irises at his home garden. 'Glorious Reign' was on display at the 2007 Oklahoma City AIS Convention and two tall bearded selections, 'Westcliffe Beauty' and 'Mustard Impact,' have been introduced this year (see the Long's Gardens' ad in this issue on page 36, with color photos on the inside back cover).

The four hybridizers that I just mentioned all introduce their irises through Long's Gardens in Boulder, and Long's stocks most of their

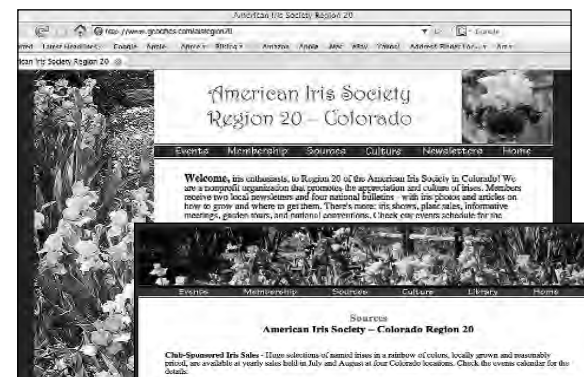
plants, along with a number of varieties by some of our deceased hybridizers, including Durrance and Stetson.

Lowell Baumunk introduces his plants through his own commercial garden, Iris Colorado. He introduced his first iris in 1999, 'Midsummer Night's Dream' (IB), and has rapidly established a reputation as an innovative hybridizer. He is certainly the most versatile of our active hybridizers, having introduced tall bearded, border, intermediate, standard dwarf, miniature tall bearded, arilbred, and a few species crosses.

Bob Van Liere has a large commercial garden, Iris4U, which is open to the public during bloom season. He has been making crosses for about 10 years and introduced his first iris in 2005. He specializes in tall bearded, and is beginning to receive recognition for some of his introductions. Bob now has several thousand plants in his seedling beds, and I've noticed quite a number of really impressive new colors and patterns. It takes a long time to establish your own lines, and we're beginning to see his hard work come to fruition (see Bob's ad in this issue on page 26).

One of the most compelling reasons for growing local introductions is that you can be confident that these varieties are hardy in our climate. Furthermore, the rhizomes from local gardens are freshly dug and ready to plant, so with only some basic care after planting, they will become established before the weather becomes really cold, and can survive the winter. Of course, the very best reason for growing local introductions is that so many of them are at the leading edge in color and form, and are as impressive as the introductions from growers like Keppel, Schreiner's, or Mid-America. At the past five National Conventions I've seen Colorado introductions growing in dozens of display gardens, they seem to grow well all over the country.

Visit our Region's Web site, at www.geocities.com/aisregion20, to see



numerous pictures of Colorado irises. Check Long's Gardens' catalog, www.longsgardens.com, for irises by Tom, Lois,

Dave, and Jerry. You can find Bob's catalog at www.iris4u.com, and Lowell's online catalog at his Web site www.iriscolorado.com.

Colorado Garden Club Maintains a Dykes Iris Garden

By Lynn Cleveland



The Queens of Spades, a small garden club in Littleton, Colorado, owns and maintains the only complete collection of Dykes Medal irises on public display in Colorado.

The Dykes Memorial Medal is the highest award for an iris. It may be given annually to two varieties of proven garden merit, one introduced and grown in England, the other in the United States or Canada. The first Dykes Iris Memorial Medal was awarded in 1927 to the variety 'San Francisco.' The award is open to irises from any classification the second year after an Award of Merit or its equivalent is achieved. Fifteen percent or more of the total vote is needed and only American Iris Society registered judges may vote. Judging is rigorous. Indeed, there are years in which no iris wins the award!

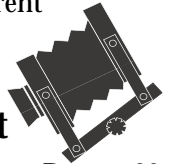
In 1974, the Queens of Spades garden club received a complete collection of North American Dykes irises from the club's former president, Mary Jo Christianson. The local parks and recreation district gave the club a small plot in a public park in which to plant the collection. Each year, the club raised funds to purchase new award winning rhizomes and to replace past years' rhizomes as needed. The collection soon outgrew its small plot and in 1983 the Dykes irises were moved to Gallup Gardens, a public garden adjacent to Bemis Public Library in downtown Littleton. A perennial border and a viewing bench enhance the enjoyment of the garden design.

The club's two dozen members, who range in age from 30 to 85, maintain the garden with cooperation from the parks and recreation district, and continue to add irises each year. One of the most difficult tasks is keeping the irises labeled. The club originally installed metal or plastic tags, but over the years many of the tags had become illegible or had disappeared. As in any public park, theft and vandalism were occasional problems as well. In 2007 the club undertook a major relabeling project. The irises were identified during bloom season. The club raised funds to purchase a complete new set of durable, legible labels. In addition, they decided to honor deceased members with memorial labels on the iris of the year of the member's death.



"We're proud to be the stewards of this unique iris collection," says the club's iris chairperson, Julia Duggan. Club member Lynn Cleveland adds, "Our club has been in existence for almost 50 years. For about two-thirds of that time, the Queens of Spades have been responsible for this special iris bed. Everyone pitches in on workdays, and, in the best garden club tradition, we always treat ourselves to lunch afterward!"

The Queens of Spades club is a member of the Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs, Inc. Its current president is Star Stevens.



Third Annual AIS National Photo Contest

The photo contest, launched by AIS Region 14, is back. Two Region 20 members won awards in '06 and '07. You too can win. The prizes are generous, the entry fee is free and it's fun. Now is the time, plan your entries for the 2008 contest. Go to www.irises.org/photocontestmain.htm for details.

Iris Gardens — A Must Visit

All listed gardens are available for viewing during the 2008 bloom season. Some of the gardens have irises available for sale, others are hobby or public gardens. Call to arrange a garden visit — they'd love to see you.

Lowell Baumunk	Iris Colorado, southwest Littleton	303-908-2450
Russ Eacker	Dr. Loomis Trial Garden, Col. Spgs	719-633-5193
Catherine Gates	Long's Gardens, Boulder	303-442-2353
Lynda Love	Southeast Denver	303-757-1750
Tom Magee	Littleton	303-730-7417
David Miller	Golden	303-277-0358
Orvid & Lois Olson	Southeast Denver	303-756-5375
Randy Penn	Englewood	303-761-5170
Frances Smothers	Fritzie's Iris Patch, Golden	303-279-0496
Bob Van Liere	Iris 4U, southwest Denver	303-789-4747

The following gardens are open to the public. Gallup is maintained by the Queens of Spades Garden Club (see facing page). It is located in downtown Littleton adjacent to the Bemis Public Library.

Lynn Cleveland	Gallup Gardens, Littleton	303-347-1765
Iris display garden	Hudson Gardens, Littleton	303-797-8565

Contact Glenn Guenterberg at 303-979-0935 to list your private garden or a public iris garden that should be included.



Local Commercial Iris Sources

Fritzie's Iris Patch – 17046 W. 12th Ave., Golden, CO 80401.

Great intermediate bearded iris selections and many recent tall bearded introductions. For directions call **Frances Smothers** – 303-279-0496



Iris Colorado – **LBaumunk@iriscolorado.com** (introductions by **Lowell Baumunk** and bearded iris species) **www.iriscolorado.com** 10918 Sunshine Dr., Littleton, CO 80125. Please call before visiting – 303-908-2450

Iris 4U – **www.iris4u.com** . . . **iris4u2@comcast.net** (grows 1000 named varieties as well as **Bob Van Liere's** introductions) 2700 West Amherst Ave., Denver, CO 80236. Open Mon. – Sat. 10 to 6, Sun. 12 to 6 – 303-789-IRIS (4747)

Long's Gardens – **info@longsgardens.com** (Since 1905, family run gardens, many varieties including famous Colorado introductions by Durrance, Magee, D. Miller, Stetson, Olson, J. Hall and others) 3240 Broadway, PO Box 19, Boulder, CO 80306. Open 7 days a week, May and early June, 9 to 5 . . . **www.longsgardens.com** – **Catherine & Dennis Gates** – 303-442-2353

Olson's Garden – **orvido@msn.com** (home garden, over 200 varieties) 4875 E. Louisiana, Denver, CO 80246. Open during bloom season but a call before visiting would be appreciated. **Lois & Orvid Olson** – 303-756-5375

Penn's Garden – **randy_penn@comcast.net** (Many varieties in several locations) Oxford & Huron Ct., Englewood, CO 80110. Call or e-mail for an appointment – **Randy Penn** – 303-761-5170.

Commercial Iris Source Outside Metro Area

Greenhorn Valley Irises – **greenhornvaliris@sbcglobal.net** I-25 south, past Pueblo (exit 74), go south on east frontage road to large iris display at the Colorado City KOA campground. Open mid-May – mid-July. . . **www.greenhornvalleyirises.com** For paper catalog, send 2 stamps with your name and address to: Greenhorn Valley Irises, PO Box 19609, Colorado City, CO 81019 – **Pat Soland** – 719-676-2952



Commercial Iris Garden Listing Policy

Region 20 listings are printed in the spring and may be up to five lines long. Out-of-region iris advertisers may submit directory listings of up to five lines, for \$20.00. Questions? E-mail **chrimage@comcast.net** or call 303-979-0935. **Fall deadline October 3, 2008.**



Russ Eacker presents Bob Van Liere with a Dr. Loomis Award at the Region 20 February general meeting.

Bob Van Liere Wins Loomis Award

Russ Eacker presented Bob Van Liere with the 2007 Dr. Loomis Award for 'Just Teasing,' Champagne Elegance x Good Fairy, an '05 third-year tall bearded iris introduction. The award recognizes superior performance in the harsh, high altitude environment of the Dr. Loomis Memorial Trial Garden, located in Colorado Springs.



The presentation was made during the February Region 20 general meeting by Russ Eacker.

Russ and Carol Eacker tend the garden and evaluate the irises submitted by growers from around the world.

2008 AIS Region 20 Judges

The AIS board of directors again revised the titles for judges. Note: Retired judges may no longer judge in iris shows, only accredited judges (Emeritus, Master, and Garden Exhibition) can serve in that capacity. Therefore, retired judges will no longer be included in the annual approved judges list published in the spring issue of this newsletter.

Emeritus (formerly Master)

Catherine Long Gates

Master (formerly Senior)

Linda Doty-Nystrom
Carol Eacker
Russ Eacker

Dennis Gates
Thomas Magee
David G. Miller

Patricia Morgan
Betty Roberts

Garden Exhibition (formerly Fully Accredited Garden)

Marty Artzberger
Lowell Baumunk III

Stephen Blecher
Lynda Love

Ellen McIntosh
Grace Syme

Apprentices

Elsie Funk Sally Funk Glenn Guenterberg Bob Van Liere

For a complete definition of a fully accredited judge please visit our Region 20 Web site at **www.geocities.com/aisregion20**.

Nina Winegar Award

Nominate a deserving member of Region 20 for the Nina Winegar Award. This award is named after the first RVP of Region 20, who was instrumental in forming the Region and influential in its early development. Mrs. Winegar was one of those members that worked for many years to see that the society grew and prospered. The eponymous award honors those who have followed in her footsteps. The winner receives a lifetime membership in the American Iris Society, or if already a life member, the winner may choose a life membership in a section of AIS.

The nominee must be a Region 20 member and have performed exceptional work for Region 20 over a minimum of 10 years. Please give as much information as possible about the ways in which the nominee has contributed to the region.

Nominations must be in writing. Send nominations to the selection committee chairwoman, Catherine Gates, at P.O. Box 19, Boulder CO 80306-0019 or e-mail them to catherine@longsgardens.com. The nomination deadline is **August 1, 2008**.

Glenn and Karen Schultz
invite you to their 12th annual

Open Garden and Daylily Sale

Saturday, July 12th • 8a.m. - 4p.m.

More than 4,000 registered named varieties for your viewing pleasure and several hundred container grown varieties for sale.

Sale will benefit The Rocky Mountain Alley Cat Alliance

The Cat Lady's Garden

An American Hemerocallis Society Display Garden
15643 East 35th Place • (303) 366-9689
(near I-70 and Chambers Rd. in Aurora)

Bring this ad & receive **1 free daylily** for every 5 daylilies purchased!



2008 Region 20 Officers

Officers

Acting Regional Vice President – Stephen Blecher, sblecher@comcast.net – 303-798-9103, 1309 Ridge Rd., Littleton, CO 80120-3231

Treasurer – Suzanne McCarthy, hockeynuteh@comcast.net – 303-232-1653, 395 Balsam St., Lakewood, CO 80226

Secretary – Lisa Story, lisaraystory@comcast.net – 303-233-8354

Past RVP – Betty Roberts, florabetty@aol.com – 719-282-9642

Directors

Terms Expiring in 2009

Dave Miller, DMillerIrisx@att.net – 303-277-0358

Bob Van Liere, iris4u2@comcast.net – 303-789-4747

Richard Nolde, Region 20 webmaster, nrichard8@qwest.net – 720-283-8752

Terms Expiring in 2008

Dave Holm, spuds@bresnan.net – 719-852-2497

Position currently vacant

Patrice Van Vleet, clrimage@comcast.net – 303-979-0935

Affiliate Directors

Elmohr – Jackie Goodwin, jackielvsroses@comcast.net – 719-460-1236

Loomis – Rose McClain, rmcclain001@centurytel.net – 719-254-3462

Newsletter Editor and Publisher

Glenn Guenterberg & Patrice Van Vleet, clrimage@comcast.net – 303-979-0935

Webmaster

Richard Nolde, nrichard8@qwest.net – 720-283-8752

Region Committee Leads — *Phone numbers already listed in other area

Bylaws – Betty Roberts 719-282-9642

Membership – Lynda Love 303-757-1750

Display Board Content – Stephen Blecher*

Programs – Betty Roberts 719-282-9642

Door Prizes – Carol Eacker 719-633-5193

Publicity – Bob Van Liere 303-789-4747

Garden Tour – Lisa Story 303-233-8354

Research Liaison – Dave Miller*

Hand-outs/Display Board Lynda Love*

Sale – Stephen Blecher 303-798-9103

Historian – Catherine Gates 303-442-2353

Show – Betty Roberts 719-282-9642

Judges Trng. – Russ Eacker 719-633-5193

Sunshine – Carol Eacker*

Elmohr Iris Society Officers

President – Jackie Goodwin 719-460-1236

Historian – Carol Eacker 719-633-5193

VP & Show Dir. – Grace Syme 719-392-0110

Parliamentarian – Elsie Funk 719-636-3895

Secretary – Marilyn Schwartz 303-755-4713

Sunshine – Carol Eacker 719-633-5193

Treasurer – Sally Funk 719-477-0435

Loomis Test Garden – Carol & Russ Eacker*

Membrshp. – Jackie Goodwin 719-460-1236

***Phone numbers listed elsewhere on page**

Loomis Iris Society Officers

President – Rose McClain 719-254-3462

Secretary – Karen Tomky 719-267-4012

VP – Lynne Apker 719-267-3663

Treas. – Paula Bennedsen 719-267-3245

2008 Introductions from Long's Gardens



COPPER (Magee) TB 37" E Large flowers are a rich orange tan. Deep orange beards are set off by a light gold blaze. Strategem X (Sky Surf X Envious) EC 2000 \$40.00

MARY McKENNA (Durrance by Bobal) BB 21" M Near white standards provide vivid contrast to the lavender falls with brick red overlay. Near white veins radiate from the yellow beards. Parentage unknown \$30.00

MUSTARD IMPACT (Jerry Hall) TB 30" L Yellow standards top falls that are infused with mustard yellow. Grey-green streak below yellow gold beards accentuates the mustard impact. Floriferous and bursting with vigor. Song of Norway X Chief Hematite \$40.00

SHOW MISS (Magee) TB 31" E Petite, dazzling girl for the pageant. Standards and style arms are gold, falls gold with purple plic hafts extending down rim of falls. Ivory blaze at tip of orange beards. Showcase X Coloradoan EC 1999 \$40.00

SUNSHINE PEAK (David Miller) TB 30" M Nicely branched with a minimum of 7 buds. Standards and style arms are a clear light yellow with white falls outlined in yellow. Very robust grower will surely please. Named for one of the shorter Colorado 14,000' snow capped peaks because of its shorter stature, but the Sunshine and Snow combo make for a Good Colorado Day! Little Mary Sunshine X Tatiana \$40.00

WESTCLIFFE BEAUTY (Jerry Hall) TB 40" ML Big blue lavender to mauve self is nicely ruffled and laced. Beards and haft markings are yellow gold. Tall, well branched sturdy stalks, robust growth, and a lovely sweet fragrance all reflect on the appropriateness of its name - one of the truly beautiful spots in Colorado. Honky Tonk Blues X Mystic's Muse \$40.00

View these and our other offerings at www.longsgardens.com

Shipping charge \$7.50. Orders over \$50.00 deduct 10%
Phone, Fax or Mail Orders. Visa, Mastercard, Discover
Long's Gardens; P.O. Box 19; Boulder, CO 80306-0019
303-442-2353 fax 303-413-1323

LONG'S GARDENS - INTRODUCTIONS FOR 2008



SHOW MISS



MARY McKENNA



MUSTARD IMPACT



COPPER



WESTCLIFFE BEAUTY



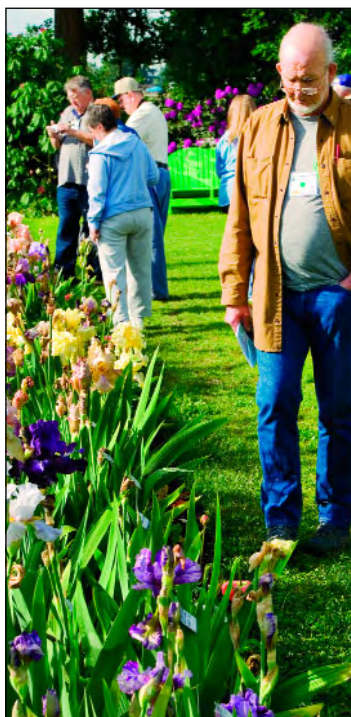
SUNSHINE PEAK



One of the last pictures taken of Rob in his garden in Denver, by his good friend Florence Darthenay, from France.



'H.C. Stetson,' winner of the first prize, the Premio Firenze, named after Rob's grandfather, pictured in his Denver garden. AIS Bulletin #329, p. 72, April 2003.



Rob viewing Schreiner's iris beds during one of the few sunny days at the Portland 2006 Convention.