

March 29, 2019

HIPS Northeast Director Report

It is an honor, and pleasure, to work on behalf of such an organization. In 2018, my first year as Northeast Director, I participated as a board member and took initial steps to fostering better awareness of HIPS in my region. Membership brochures were left at Master Gardener tables at Farmer's Markets and several local libraries and were posted at five farm and garden centers. I attended meetings of a couple of local garden clubs, and a Master Gardener workshop, and spoke briefly about HIPS. People were not familiar with the organization but enthusiasm was expressed as well as interest in learning further.

There was one rescue in our region during the year. Harriet Robinson, a member of HIPS and the Maine Iris Society, let us know that irises from a garden owned by a woman who had recently passed had been offered for their local society annual sale. As some of the iris were likely historic, Harriet saw an opportunity to rescue rhizomes for Guardian Gardens and spearheaded efforts to do so. She mailed them to me here in Vermont where they will grow on for a few years until they are ready to be shared. While it takes many shovels to save historic irises, it only takes one thoughtful person to know enough and care enough to make things happen.

As well as being the HIPS Northeast Director, I am a Guardian Gardener and have assembled a large collection of historic iris here in my own beds over the last several years, establishing a couple of National Collections. With several family challenges, especially during summer and fall 2018, I've not been able to be as attentive in the gardens as I'd like but hopefully will get the garden opened up again as a HIPS display garden in 2019.