

HIPS ANNUAL DIRECTOR REPORT

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

The second year of being on the HIPS Board has been much more productive for me now that I've gotten to "know my way around" with the various members and the duties expected of a director.

As the South Central director I tried to really promote HIPS and historic irises in general last year. I displayed HIPS membership brochures at club meetings, rhizome sales, the annual regional meeting and other pertinent garden events with the three DFW area iris clubs I belong to. They were well received and hopefully generated some new members.

I had my personal garden listed as a HIPS Display Garden and turned it into a commercial venture listing both new and historic irises for sale to the public. I've been using it for additional educational experiences to help people identify historic irises in their own gardens. It's been so nice seeing visitors arrive with blooms in jars, on stalks or stuck in Dixie cups to try to match or ask a question about the ID of what they are growing. I've responded to many inquiries about historic irises through my website and offered free rhizomes to test grow to several people to help with IDs.

I have been working with a neighboring iris collector to identify some historic NOIDs in both of our gardens. Many of these came from an elderly iris collector in our area but some have been existing in one or the other of our gardens for many years. Two heads are always better than one! I'm in the process of obtaining more rare historic irises from a couple of local gardens to grow and to add to the HIPS rhizome sale this year.

I've been promoting historic irises both in my garden and on Facebook with photos and comments. Many times the historic irises seem to be ignored when it comes to GOOD photos being taken and posted to online groups. I've tried to get good representative pictures of each iris that has bloomed here this year and have shared them online.

I also accepted the job of the Annual Rhizome Sale Chair and have attempted to revamp the format to make the sale a much better event for both HIPS and the buyers. With the help of Cathy and Nancy, we think we have a good plan in place to make the sale very successful this year.

I have been encouraged by the number of people that have shown an interest in adding to their collection of historic irises this year. With the added internet presence of the new HIPS website and active Facebook page, people are realizing they have their own little jewels that they took for granted before. I've really enjoyed working with the team of dynamic preservation minded people on the HIPS BOD and am looking forward to a great year in 2016!

Judy Schneider