

larger appearance. On the west bank was built a 10' wide path bordered on each side with three rows of irises planted in clumps of 50 of a kind. Some of the earlier Japanese irises established are T. S. WARE, BLUE GIANT and MARGARET. Mid-season ones are PINK AND OPAL, MOONLIGHT WAVES, BOSHU-NO-TEN and PURPLE HIGO. Late bloomers are PINK LADY, PAINTED LADY, HELEN WELLS and BLUE FUKRON plus many, many others.

In 1938 a Mr. A. T. Heath, head of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company, bought 70 acres nearby, and deeded it to the city to be developed as a garden or park under the supervision of Mr. Bland. Now for the first time Mr. Bland was to get some help (the feeding of the swans alone was costing him \$2,000.00 per year). Tennis courts, picnic tables, recreation areas have been added. During the iris bloom season parades and dances were held. During the war activities were curtailed. From 1947 up to this date iris bloom season is a week of festivities. It is not unusual to find people from five nations in the garden at a time. Last year 100,000 were there to witness the spectacle of floats, crowning of the two Queens (Queen Iris and Neptune's Daughter), sky-diving and air show, sidewalk art show, bicycle rodeo, karate demonstrations, tennis tournaments, band music, airplane fly-in and cross country motorcycle races.

On December 2, 1946 Mr. H. C. Bland received a radio salute for his work and gardens. It was sent out over 450 radio stations. In 1949 he deeded his tract of 50 acres to the city.

The Sumter Garden Club has contributed to this garden by putting in a walk for the blind. A guide wire about elbow high is attached to posts and on the top of each post is a plaque on which is written in braille the name of the shrub, tree or flower that is to the right, left or straight ahead.

Today the internationally known Swan Lake Iris Gardens, so named and officially dedicated to the city in 1956, totals 168 acres and are open to the public and are free. The irises are usually in bloom the last week in May.

It seems to me we in AIS have been handed a "gold mine" by Mr. Bland, but have done nothing about it—perhaps because we didn't know about it. Couldn't we plant a block of named varieties, and have name tags so it would be a place for judges to see Japanese irises and to judge them. Just a thought as I found no named irises to help with my ballot.

Thank you, Mrs. G. G. Miler, for a very interesting story for AIS. You have every reason to be proud of your father's accomplishments. It is a beautiful garden!

EXHIBITION COMMITTEE REPORT, 1971

Clarke Cosgrove, Chairman

There was a slight increase in the number of accredited shows in 1971, although drought and unseasonable weather brought about a cancellation of several scheduled shows. The increase was due largely to the staging of early as well as mid-season shows by a number of societies. The total number of shows stands at 117 with Region 22 (Arkansas and Oklahoma) forging into the lead with 17 accredited shows.

Over the past few years the winner of the Nelson Award for being judged the Best Specimen in the greatest number of shows has alternated between STEPPING OUT and WINTER OLYMPICS, with STEPPING OUT the 1971 winner in five shows. WINTER OLYMPICS was Queen in four shows and CUP RACE, JILBY and MOON RIVER had a three-way tie for third place with three shows each.

The count of shows reported by Regions is as follows:

Region	Shows	Region	Shows
1	2	13	4
2	1	14	12
3	2	15	13
4	5	16	0
5	2	17	7
6	12	18	7
7	6	19	1
8	5	20	1
9	2	21	4
10	1	22	17
11	3	23	4
12	3	24	3
		TOTAL	117

This year establishes a new distance record for the transporting of specimens to shows. Gordon Loveridge of Australia air-expressed spuria specimens from the Southern hemisphere to tie for the Bronze Medal at the La Jolla Fall Show and both the Silver and Bronze Medal winners for the spuria iris show at the Wichita convention had transported the specimens from southern California.

With 141 Exhibition Certificates awarded by judges attending the shows, this section of the report has been removed from its customary position to become a separate report and to free space for reporting winners in the Youth Division.

The movement to include a youth horticultural as well as an artistic division in the show schedule has continued to grow and to encourage this growth special recognition is being given. As the current forms for reporting shows do not include a place for the Youth Division winners it is possible some winners were not reported this year. To remedy this situation special supplementary forms have been prepared by the Exhibition Committee and will be sent to all show chairmen when the show schedule includes a Youth Division. It is imperative that show schedules be sent to the chairman of the Exhibition Committee prior to the staging of the show.