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*Photo Credits page 22:*  
 M. Locketell, *Provided*  
 JSRCC RE Garden, *L Rose*  
 Again And Again, *J.T. Aitken*

# Rebloom Visits Austin *By Mike Locketell*

Reblooming bearded iris culture can be a frustrating experience. Fall flowering traits are still not well understood. Weather and micro-climates can dramatically alter yearly results. Some varieties are so fickle, soil types can drive success or failure. Rebloom breeders end up using instincts to make their best combinations each spring to obtain more reliable offspring to flourish in any growing condition.

The late Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg convinced me to pursue remontant iris development. His wise council lasted five years. As health and growing space limited both gardening and breeding, his best instruction was confined to weekly Sunday night phone calls. Our discussions usually focused on researching registrations to find new avenues to explore with next spring's cross pollinations. The missing element was always

concrete performance data on potential candidates. New releases hitting the marketplace around this time such as 'Again And Again' TB (*S. Innerst 1999*) and 'Over And Over' TB (*S. Innerst 2001*) received scant attention and minimal distribution. Due to their obscurity, these stellar selections were never on our radar screen.



**Again And Again TB**  
*(S. Innerst 1999)*

A major blessing for me over the past few years has been opportunities to speak on rebloom beyond AIS Region 4 borders. My travels began in 2010 with early spring stops in Pittsburgh, PA (AIS Region 2) and Kansas City, MO (AIS Region 16). Indianapolis, IN

(AIS Region 6) was the scene in March 2011 for separate programs on judge's training and general rebloom culture plus recommended varieties. Could fall flowering succeed in these locales? A final verdict has yet to be rendered.

The only shortcomings to my Missouri and Indiana appearances were my luggage did not follow me back to the Richmond Airport. Upon arriving home from the Indy trip, the phone was ringing. I assumed the caller was an airline representative prepared to give me more bad news. After calming down, Pat Byrne from the Austin, TX Iris Society was innocently inviting me to be the keynote speaker at the Region

17 Summer Meeting in August 2012. My travelling pitfalls had an unexpected silver lining. An opportunity materialized to explore rebloom's promise in the Lone Star State.

Pittsburgh, Kansas City and Indianapolis can see promising fall flowering derailed by early October hard freezes. Texas on the

other hand has a longer rebloom season. If bearded iris clumps could survive summer drought and constant triple-digit daytime heat, would night temperatures below 60° F arriving in late September or early October trigger timely fall bloom on rebloom's best tall bearded selections? My only guide was results from Central Virginia.

Texas is still reeling from the effects of a devastating drought in 2011. Austin luckily received periodic rain prior to my visit to keep landscaping green and healthy. Supplemental watering, however, was still necessary to insure happy bearded iris plantings. Bonnie and Hooker Nichols are currently managing a weekly watering schedule to maintain the 2013 and 2014 AIS National Convention tour gardens in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Unless local government agencies shut off the tap, plantings should be in fine shape to captivate attendees to these two signature AIS events.



*Reblooming iris display garden at JSRCC with Janet Lejeune, member of the Fredericksburg Area Iris Society, taking photos.*



**Over And Over TB**  
(S. Innerst 2001)



**Coronation Of David TB**  
(B. Miller 1999)



**Gate Of Heaven TB**  
(L. Zurbrigg 2004)



**Sunny Disposition TB**  
(L. Zurbrigg 1991)



**Pink Attraction TB**  
(E. Hall 1988)

As spring turned into summer in Central Virginia, remontants in my public display bed at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Goochland, VA (west of Richmond) started reblooming in the final days of May. Wow! Flowering continued through June and July despite sporadic dryness and intense summer heat. Performance came as a complete surprise.

Tall bearded selections leading the way were ‘Again And Again’ TB (S. Innerst 1999), ‘Another Bridge’ TB (B. Wilkerson 2005), ‘Coronation of David’ TB (B. Miller 1999), ‘Gate of Heaven’ TB (L. Zurbrigg 2004), ‘Northward Ho’ TB (L. Zurbrigg 1991), ‘Over And Over’ TB (S. Innerst 2001), ‘Pink Attraction’ TB (E. Hall 1988) and ‘Sunny Disposition’ TB (L. Zurbrigg 1991).

Sensational medians adding to the fun were ‘Twiggy’ BB (D. Spoon 2004), ‘I’ll Be Back’ IB (J.T. Aitken 2004), ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream’ IB (L. Baumunk 1999), ‘Lady Emma’ MTB (F. Jones 1986) and ‘Sailboat Bay’ SDB (L. Zurbrigg 2001). My unexpected results surely added some extra flavor and energy to my Austin speaking efforts.

Programs commenced at the Region 17 Summer Meeting on Friday night, August 3<sup>rd</sup>. My initial offering, *Breeding Trends for Rebloom*, traced Zurbrigg, Locketell and Betty Wilkerson (Kentucky) contributions to rebloom



**Lady Emma MTB** (F. Jones 1986)

development. It followed Ken Fuchs’ delightful visual digital tour of featured gardens at the AIS 2012 National Convention in Ontario,

CA. There were many eye-catching blooms to see. Ken’s program was a tough act to follow. To be fair, I did have the option to be the opening act.

Saturday morning featured a judge’s training school on rebloom. Today’s AIS judges can be easily overwhelmed by the sheer volume of choices on the yearly

Awards Ballot. Even though remontant varieties are few, a given selection’s ability to rebloom should be strongly considered in voting. Good discussion led to some suggested changes in the AIS Judge’s Handbook concerning rebloom’s definition and more awareness regarding its value in garden evaluation.

My keynote program followed an informative PowerPoint slide show given by Bonnie Nichols on the Dallas-Fort Worth AIS National Convention tour gardens at the Saturday night banquet. Plantings feature a nice variation in micro-climates and layouts to showcase the best new releases currently available in beard-



**Sailboat Bay SDB**  
(L. Zurbrigg 2001)



**Twiggy BB**  
(D. Spoon 2004)



**Midsummer Night's Dream IB**  
(L. Baumunk 1999)



**I'll Be Back IB**  
(J.T. Aitken 2004)



**Northward Ho TB**  
(L. Zurbrigg 1991)



**Another Bridge TB**  
(B. Wilkerson 2005)

**Photo Credits page 23:**  
Over And Over, C. Buchheim  
Coronation Of David, C. Buchheim  
Gate Of Heaven, G. Spoon  
Sunny Disposition, C. Buchheim  
Pink Attraction, C. Buchheim  
Lady Emma, L. Rose  
Sailboat Bay, L. Rose  
Twiggy, G. Spoon  
Midsummer Night's Dream, J.T. Aitken  
I'll Be Back, C. Buchheim  
Northward Ho, R. Probst  
Another Bridge, L. Rose

Following are photos of three Lockatell Reblooming Guest Irises from the 2012 AIS Convention:



#20517-MB TB  
(M. Lockatell)



Soda Fountain Shuffle  
TB (M. Lockatell 2009)



Double Dare BB  
(M. Lockatell 2009)

**Photo Credits page 24:**  
Lockatell in Garden, L. Rose  
#20517-MB, C. Buchheim  
Soda Fountain Shuffle,  
C. Buchheim  
Double Dare, C. Buchheim

ed and Louisiana irises. Visitors will have the unique chance to monitor garden performance over a two-year period.

My digital presentation to close the two day event focused on culture tips for successful rebloom and a recommended variety review in all bearded classes based on Central Virginia and AIS Region 4 yearly results. Can Texans replicate Mid-Atlantic results? If the answer is an eventual yes, rebloom can count on invaluable flow of performance data from its Southernmost boundaries to drive future breeding development and distribution.

A huge plus for rebloom advocates in Region 17 is Jim Landers. He is now the Southern Director for the Reblooming Iris Society. Jim is responsible for collecting, tabulating and discussing results in the *Reblooming Iris Recorder*. His reporting will undoubtedly help us better understand fall flowering behavior in another important growing climate. Jim's enthusiasm and energy are most welcome. My hope is some of the newer tall bearded rebloomers discussed in this article will fare well in both Texas and Oklahoma.

I would like to thank the Austin Iris Society and AIS Region 17 for their generous hospitality during my visit. Nelda and Joe Moore



Mike Lockatell at JSRCC  
Reblooming Iris Display Bed

were great hosts. As time allowed, they helped me sample Austin cuisine, visit landmarks such as the State Capitol and the University of Texas plus various neighborhoods in town. Two highlights to mention were a stop to see Joe's friend's G Scale Model Train Layout and Railroad Memorabilia Collection on the second floor of his business establishment. We also managed to find a local salon featured on "Globe Trekker," a PBS travel show. A bingo game, not alcohol, was my motivation for visiting. The event takes place each Sunday afternoon, but I was already on my way back to the Old Dominion. Timing is surely not one of my life's specialties.

Austin Iris Society's Pat Byrne merits considerable praise for her assistance in helping me with necessary travel arrangements and advice on content for my digital programs. I also thoroughly enjoyed conversations on culture and breeding with Dana Brown, RIS President plus Bonnie and Hooker Nichols. AIS Region 17 put on a fine show for this Northern New Jersey native. Dallas-Fort Worth will surely do the same for AIS members in 2013 and 2014. News flash: My luggage successfully returned with me to Richmond. It was a nice end to a great trip.

## 4th of July Rebloom News

### RIS Electronic Newsletter *By Carole Buchheim, Editor*

Because of the time span between printing the Spring *Recorder* and the Fall/Winter issue, in 2010 we began publishing a summer electronic newsletter, the *4th of July Rebloom News*. It contains news items, stories, ads, RIS fundraiser sales, forms for recording rebloom information, the Symposium Ballot and more. It is sent electronically in PDF format ONLY for those of you who have computer access. It would be cost prohibitive for the RIS to print and mail copies.

However, only about half of you RIS members are receiving it because *WE DO NOT HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS*. If you would like to receive the *4th of July Rebloom News* electronic newsletter, please contact Rose Kinard, RIS Membership Chairperson: **RKinard@minesmo.org**.

Take advantage of this opportunity to communicate more about one of our favorite subjects—reblooming irises!

Visit the *Reblooming Iris Society Website* ■ [www.rebloomingiris.com](http://www.rebloomingiris.com)