



American Iris Society Morgan-Wood Medal history + winners

History by Clarence Mahan

This medal is restricted to Siberian (SIB) irises. It is named in honor of F. Cleveland Morgan (1882-1962) and Ira E. Wood (1903-1977).

F. Cleveland Morgan was a pioneer Canadian breeder of Siberian irises and a founding member of AIS. Some of his magnificent cultivars still enhance gardens around the globe. Three of his best known irises are 'Caesar,' 'Caesar's Brother' and 'Tropic Night.' Educated in England and Switzerland, he was a director of the Henry Morgan Company and a patron of Canadian arts. Morgan's association with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts spanned a period of forty-five years, including 8 years as president of that institution. The museum held a special exhibition in 1961 to display more than six hundred works of art that he had donated.

AIS instituted the Morgan Award for Siberian Irises, the predecessor of the Morgan-Wood Medal, in 1951.

Ira E. Wood, who was known as Sandy to his friends, and his wife Betty were both scientists who worked for Bell Telephone Laboratories in New Jersey. They shared their iris hobby and were active in the activities of AIS and the Society for Siberian Irises. They often undertook iris society projects as a team and one of these was the production of the Handbook for the American Iris Society Members and Officers. The AIS awarded them both the Distinguished Service Medal in 1974.

Wood hybridized Siberian irises, but he introduced only one cultivar 'Ong's Hat.' He also served as a director of AIS and as its second vice president.

The Morgan Award

The highest award reserved exclusively for Siberian Irises within the American Iris Society from 1952 through 1984.

1952 Tycoon Cleveland
1952 Eric the Red Whitney
1953 Caesar's Brother Morgan
1954 Tropic Night Morgan
1962 White Swirl Cassebeer
1963 Snowcrest Gage
1964 Tealwood Varner
1965 Violet Flare Cassebeer
1966 Cool Spring Kellogg
1967 Blue Brilliant Cassebeer
1968 Pirouette Cassebeer
1969 Velvet Night Edwards
1970 Dewful McGarvey

1971 Super Ego McGarvey
1972 Ego McGarvey
1973 Swank Hager
1974 Grand Junction McCord
1975 Halcyon Seas McCord
1976 Orville Fay McEwen
1977 Vi Luihn DuBose
1978 Silver Edge McEwen
1979 Augury McGarvey
1980 Ruffled Velvet McEwen
1981 Butter and Sugar McEwen
1982 Steve Varner Briscoe
1983 Ann Dasch Varner
1984 Pink Haze McGarvey

The Morgan-Wood Medal

The highest award in the American Iris Society reserved exclusively for Siberian Irises from 1986 to the present

1986 Butter and Sugar McEwen
1987 Steve Varner Briscoe
1988 Pink Haze McGarvey
1989 Dance Ballerina Dance Varner
1990 King of Kings Varner
1991 Mabel Coday Helsley
1992 Lady Vanessa Hollingworth
1993 Jewelled Crown Hollingworth
1994 Sultan's Ruby Hollingworth
1995 Aqua Whispers A.M. Miller
1996 Shaker's Prayer Warner
1997 Coronation Anthem Hollingworth
1998 Frosted Cranberry A.M. Miller
1999 Roaring Jelly Schafer/Sacks
2000 Over in Gloryland Hollingworth
2001 Strawberry Fair Hollingworth
2002 Lake Keuka Borglum
2003 Careless Sally Schafer/Sacks
2004 Blueberry Fair Hollingworth
2005 Where Eagles Dare Helsley
2006 Riverdance Schafer/Sacks
2007 Ships are Sailing Schafer/Sacks
2008 FOND KISS (Marty Schafer/Jan Sacks)
2009 RUFFLES AND FLOURISHES (Robert Hollingworth)