

## **History of the Franklin Cook Memorial Cup**

By Doug Chyz February 2023

The Franklin Cook Memorial Cup originated in 1947 as the President's Cup. The following is as best a historic record of the Cup as I could piece together.

Below is a copied and edited excerpt from the Annual Meeting 1947 feature by Sam Y. Caldwell in the July 1947, #106, AIS Bulletin, page 43, when the cup was first awarded.

Election returns always bring an air of excitement, so the final event of the evening--presentation of the President's Cup--was eagerly awaited. In accordance with rules of competition for the new award, ballots had already been cast by attendants at the meeting.

"This cup," explained the donor, Dr. Cook, "goes to the originator of the most outstanding named variety of any duly introduced iris (not necessarily a new one) seen at the time of the Annual Meeting growing in any garden on the program, and judged by members of the A. I. S. attending to be the most meritorious iris seen at the meeting. Unintroduced seedlings are not eligible.

"The original cup shall be held by each annual winner for one year only, until some hybridizer shall receive the award three times, when it will pass into his permanent possession.

"A small replica of the original cup will be donated to each annual winner, suitably engraved."

Tabulation of votes revealed the people's choice to be 'Xantha', showy yellow iris in Orville Fay's garden. Dr. Cook passed the handsome cup to his proud neighbor. Dave Hall's marvelous pink 'Cherie', handicapped by having only a few flowers open at the far end of the "Back 80" and missed by many visitors, nevertheless took second place. Fay scored again when his 'Desert Song' ranked third.

The cup was awarded from 1947 thru 1955 as the President's Cup. The following is copied and edited from the July 1956 #142 AIS Bulletin when the cup was renamed for Dr. Franklin P. Cook.

## **The Franklin Cook Memorial Cup**

W. F. SCOTT, Jr.

In 1947 the late Dr. Franklin P. Cook, then President of the Society, donated a Cup to be known as the "President's Cup." It was to be awarded annually to the originator of a duly named and introduced iris, seen in a garden included on the regular program of the Annual Meeting, and judged by popular vote to be the most outstanding such iris seen at the Meeting.

Each winner holds possession of the Cup for one year, and then receives a small replica to keep permanently. The names of winners are inscribed on the base of the Cup, and they have been:

- 1947 Chicago, Mr. Orville Fay, 'Zantha'
- 1948 Nashville, Mr. Geddes Douglas, 'Amandine'
- 1949 Portland, Dr. R. E. Kleinsorge, 'Sunset Blaze'
- 1950 Sioux City, Mrs. C. G. Whiting, 'Blue Rhythm'
- 1951 Shreveport, Mrs. Alex Smith, 'Royal Gem'
- 1952 St. Louis, Mr. Clifford Benson, 'Bellerive'
- 1953 Boston Mrs. F. P. Lowry, 'Violet Harmony'
- 1954 Salt Lake City, Mr. Tell Muhlestein, 'Pink Fulfillment'
- 1955 Hamilton, Mrs. Harry 'Bickle, Agliers'

Following the death of Dr. Cook, the Board of Directors changed the name of the award to The Franklin Cook Memorial Cup, by which name it is now known.

Only the most cursory inspection of the above record is needed to discover that the Cup has always gone to a local iris. This was not the wish or intention of Dr. Cook, nor is it the wish or intention of any member of the Board of Directors. It is the result of two very natural things, which no reasonable rules could eliminate. It is natural that the local people want a local iris to win. It is also natural that a local iris should grow well, and be in plentiful supply, on its home grounds. The combination of these two factors is almost unbeatable. Some day an outside iris may win, but 1956 was no different from the earlier years. A local iris won, and well deserved to win, for it put on a lovely display in nearly every garden on the regular program. The iris was Mrs. Douglas Pattison's 'White Peacock', and the balloting was decisive:

- 'White Peacock' 122 votes
- 'Gold Cup' 39
- 'Char-Maize' 38
- 'Frances Craig' 36
- 'Swan Ballet' 20
- Next 21 varieties 44
- Total votes cast .....299

Congratulations to Mrs. Pattison on an extraordinarily fine iris!

From the January 1966 #180 AIS Bulletin, during the Directors' Meeting, it was voted to activate an award noted in the below excerpt. This vote is where the Franklin Cook Memorial Cup was designated to recognize outside of host region iris, and the cup known today as the President's Cup was designated to recognize within host region iris.

It was voted to activate an award in the form of a cup to be awarded the best iris seen at a convention produced by a hybridizer within the Region. The Franklin Cook Memorial Cup will be restricted to the best iris seen at a convention produced by a hybridizer outside the host Region.