

David Hall Popularity Poll Award

David F. Hall was born in Canada in 1875. He started work as a logger for AT&T, cutting timber for telephone poles. Meanwhile, he went to night school to study law. He became AT&T's lawyer for 34 years until his retirement. In 1913 he and his wife moved to Wilmette, Illinois.

He was first known for his work with irises. He created the first totally "flamingo pink" iris. However, he had already started hybridizing success daylilies and achieved producing the first true pink daylily cultivar by line breeding his Bells' (1945) with *H. fulva rosea*. This combination eventually led to the beautiful 'May Hall' (1957) which garnered him the Stout Medal in 1959.



Dave Hall man of solid known for his was said to daylily

In 1956 he Bertrand Farr outstanding hybridization.

– Photo by Rob Schreiner

was known as a modest integrity. He was also dry sense of humor and enliven any gathering of enthusiasts.

was awarded the Silver Medal for achievement in

On June 25, 1961 he was presented with a silver tray during a gathering at Sarcoxie, Mississippi, and it was proclaimed to be "David Hall Day". His other honors are too numerous to mention.



– Photo by Julie Covington

Hall was so highly thought of that this award was created and initially funded by the Wilds, as he had a close association with them. Over the years it has at times been a national poll, and other times a regional poll. Hall himself received the award named for him three times in Region 7 for 'Exalted Ruler' and again in Region 10 for 'Sea Gold'.

The original award, called the David Hall Regional Trophy, was to be a piece of silver, but in 1969 it was changed to a medal and certificate by an AHS committee. Eventually, a medal was only given with the first win for a given cultivar. Today, no more medals are being struck, so only a certificate is presented.

The medal was unique in that it was and is the only AHS medal to feature a person's likeness on it rather than the AHS logo that depicts the daylily 'Green Valley'.

David Hall lived to the age of 92, when he was struck by a train and killed.

The Popularity Poll did not begin with the Hall award in 1961 as many assume. Its origins predate even the Midwest Hemerocallis Society. Beginning in 1934, daylilies fell under the auspices of the American Amaryllis Society. In 1940, Elmer Claar, chair of the Daylily Committee reported that pending the "taking of a comprehensive official poll," he undertook an experimental poll based on the earlier work of the then late George DeWitt Kelso who polled 40 people in 1939. Claar's poll was based on three classes: plants not yet introduced; plants introduced within the last three years (1937-40); and those introduced in 1936 or prior. Further, he broke the poll down to seasons of bloom, and colors within each. There was a rather complex rating system. It appears that of the top ten daylilies for 1940 that 'Mikado' was on most of the 20 lists returned out of 67 polled. This was reported in *Herbertia*, the journal of the American Amaryllis Society.

-- Courtesy of the AHS Archives and Betsey Clark