

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the
Virginia Chess Federation

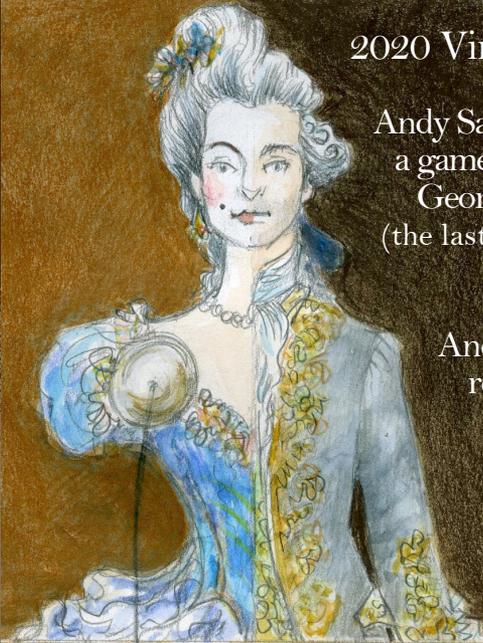
2020 - #4



2020 Virginia Closed Cancelled

Andy Samuelson looks at
a game from the
George Washington Open
(the last major OTB tournament
that was held in Virginia)

Andy Rea & Macon Shibut
revisit some chess
from pre-pandemic days



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From the VCF Board of Directors

2020 State Championship Cancelled

The previously rescheduled Virginia Open has now been cancelled altogether. For now the Charlottesville Open remains on the books for December 12-13. Please monitor the VCF website and your email closely for news on how the COVID-19 issue affects the 2020 tournament schedule.

On Saturday, July 18 the VCF Board of Directors voted 5-0 to cancel the 2020 Virginia Closed as an over-the-board event. The VCF annual business meeting will be delayed. The official motion reads as follows: *Under the authority of Section 4 of the VCF ByLaws, the Board of Directors (BOD) moves that the Annual Meeting of the Membership (ByLaws, Section 3) be delayed and rescheduled in March 2021 at the site of the annual Virginia Open. The BOD further moves to cancel the Annual 2020 Virginia Closed over-the-board tournament originally scheduled for the Labor day weekend, with the current Virginia Champion Daniel I Miller retaining his title as the State Champion until the 2021 Virginia Closed.*

The VCF Board of Directors has voted to extend for 6 months the memberships of all players whose VCF memberships will end, or have already ended, in the months of March through August 2020, inclusive. So, a player whose VCF expired in March will have their membership extended through the end of September 2020. Similarly, a player whose VCF expires in August 2020 will have their membership extended through February 2021.

Editor's Postscript: As we go to press, a check of the VCF website says also that the Fredricksburg Open, set for October, is "on hold"; and that the Virginia Closed will be "replaced" by "an online tournament in collaboration with the 2020 Virginia Commonwealth Games". Keep visiting vachess.org to get the latest details on what exactly this means,

Changing Address? Please notify the membership secretary if your address is changing! You can email changes/correction to Georgina Chin at membership@vachess.org



**Andrew Samuelson - Jesse Kraai
2020 George Washington Open
Philidor**

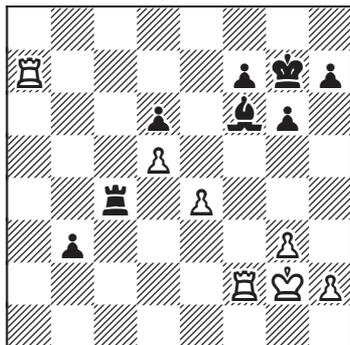
Notes by Andy Samuelson

I'd played GM Jesse Kraai twice before, with a draw and a loss. We also were team mates in the Northern Virginia Chess League for a while, so I was somewhat familiar with him. **1 e4 d6** [This was already a surprise.

My opponent seemed to play the French almost exclusively against e4] **2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 e5 4 Nf3 Nbd7 5 g3 c6 6 Bg2** [Perhaps 6 a4 first was better to stop ...b5. In the game I had less space on the queenside.] **6...b5 7 a3** [This may be unnecessary as e4 is not really hanging after 7 0-0] **7...Be7 8 O-O O-O 9 Re1 Qc7 10 b3 Re8 11 Bb2** [The engine doesn't seem to like this idea but I've had some success with this setup in the past.] **11...Bb7 12 Na2?!** [Since the knight is in the way on c3, I play to reposition it to a better square. However, the alternative 12 Nb1 Δ Nd2 was probably better than my Na2-c1-d3 plan. On d2 the knight would protect e4 and provide some central stability. On d3 it will attack e5 but e4 remains a bit weak and the knight becomes a target for Black's c-pawn.] **12...Bf8 13 Nc1 c5?** [Black ought to take on d4 first. After the text move I'm able to close the center and stabilize the position. This also keeps my e4 pawn safe. **13...exd4 14 Nxd4 a6 15 Nf5 g6 16 Ne3 Nxe4 17 Nd3 Nef6 18 Nf4 d5** give Black an extra pawn, although I'd still have some chances.] **14 d5 Nb6** [14...c4 threatens to win a piece with ...c3, which is a bit awkward to meet, but **15 Na2 Nb6 16 Nd2** is probably around equal] **15 Bc3 a5 16 Nd2 g6 17 Bf1 b4 18 Bb2 Bc8 19 Nc4** [I wasn't really sure how to proceed. I decided to trade some pieces and keep control of the c4-square. Perhaps it was better to advance the queenside pawns, eg, **19 c4 bxc3 20 Bxc3 a4 21 b4** and maybe I'm a little better but all



the pieces stay on the board and anything could happen.] **19...Bg7**
20 Nxb6 Qxb6 21 Bc4 Ba6 22 Bxa6 Qxa6 23 axb4 [Opening the c-file may not be such a good idea. Black gets pressure against c2.]
23...cxb4 24 Nd3 [trying to bring my knight to c4 via b2] **24...Qb5**
25 Bc1 Rec8 26 Ra4 [26 Nb2 Nd7 27 Be3 Nc5 28 f3 f5 29 Bf2 fxe4 30 fxe4 Black has counterplay on the queenside.] **26...Nd7 27 Be3 Bf6** [I was more worried about the central counterattack 27...f5, eg 28 f3 Bf6 29 Nb2 Bd8 I don't have the Qa1 resource that could have occurred in the game.] **28 Nb2** [28 Qa1! seems counterintuitive but may claim an advantage after some tactics: 28...Rxc2 29 Nxb4 Re2 30 Rxe2 Qxe2 31 Qf1 Qf3 32 Nc6] **28...Bd8 29 Qe2** [I wasn't sure if trading queens was to my benefit but it does relieve some of the pressure on c2 and lets me land a knight on c4] **29...Qxe2 30 Rxe2 Nb6** [This surprised me and it seems like the wrong piece to move to b6. I expected he'd avoid positions where I have a knight on c4 against the dark squared bishop. 30...Bb6 31 Nc4 Rxc4 looks like a better version of the exchange sacrifice as after 32 bxc4 Bxe3 33 Rxe3 Nc5 34 Ra1 Kg7 the knight is a good blockader and Black's passed a-pawn could be dangerous.] **31 Bxb6 Bxb6 32 Nc4 Rxc4** [He played this almost instantly. The alternatives are not appealing, eg, 32...Bc7 looks pretty passive.] **33 bxc4 Rc8 34 c3!** [Opening the position for the rooks. I wonder if my opponent missed this idea when he planned the exchange sacrifice.] **34...Rxc4 35 cxb4 axb4 36 Kg2 Bd4 37 f4** [again trying to open lines for the rooks] **37...Kg7 38 fxe5 Bxe5 39 Ra7 b3 40 Rf2 Bf6**





41 Rb7

41 e5 was an interesting alternative:

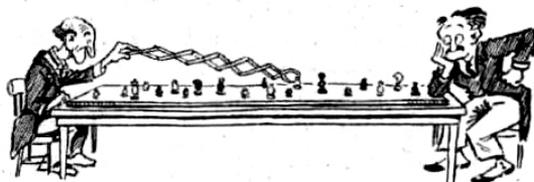
i) 41...Bxe5 42 Rxf7+ Kh6 43 Rxh7+ Kg5 44 Rhc7 Rd4 45 Rcb7 Rd3 Black has pretty good compensation;

ii) 41...dxe5 42 Rb2 Rc3 43 Rb7 Rd3 44 R2xb3 Rxd5 45 Ra3 e4 46 Raa7 Rd2+ 47 Kf1 g5 48 Rxf7+ Kg6 49 Rf8 e3 50 Ra6 Rf2+ 51 Ke1 Kg7 also seems decent for Black.

41...Rxe4 [Advancing his passed pawn, 41...b2, seemed better. 42 e5 Bxe5 43 Rxf7+ Kh6 44 Rxh7+ Kg5 45 Rhf7 is similar to variations from the previous note.] **42 Rxb3 Bd4?** [42...Re7 would have kept white's advantage to a minimum. Black really needed to avoid a rook exchange. Generally, when one side has a rook and one or more minor pieces against two rooks, the side with the two rooks benefits from a rook exchange. This position does not seem to be an exception.] **43 Rf4** [43 Rb4 was probably an even better version of the rook trade. Black is struggling to hold after 43...h6 44 h3 Kf8 45 Rc4 Bxf2 46 Rxe4 Bb6] **43...Rxf4** [He accompanied this move with a draw offer but I thought I had decent winning chances after the rook trade. The damaged pawn structure should be okay since the f4 pawn will control e5. In any event I can try with practically no risk of losing.] **44 gxf4 Kf6 45 Rb7 h6 46 Kf3 g5 47 h3 gxf4 48 Kxf4 Be5+ 49 Ke4 Kg6?** [I still need to find some way to make progress after 49...h5 50 h4 Bg3 51 Rd7 Bh2 52 Kf3 Be5] **50 Re7 f5+ 51 Kf3 Bh2** [if 51...Kf6 52 Re8 Kf7 53 Rb8 h5 54 h4 Kf6 55 Re8 Kg6 56 Ke3 Kg7 57 Re7+ Kf6 58 Re6+ Kg7 59 Kf3 White has made progress] **52 Re6+ Kg7 53 h4!** [a nice idea to break through] **53...h5** [53...Be5 54 h5 Bh2 55 Rg6+ Kh7 56 Rf6 Be5 57 Rf7+ Kg8 58 Rxf5 should be a fairly straightforward win] **54 Re2 Be5 55 Rg2+ Kh6 56 Rg5 Bf6 57 Rxf5 Bxh4 58 Rf7 Kg6 59 Rd7 Kf5 60 Rxd6** [It helps that I have a center pawn. There are some fortress possibilities with a bishop pawn if the side with the rook is not careful.] **60...Bf6** [60...Bg5 61 Rc6 h4 62 Rc7 Bd8 63 Rh7 Ke5 64 Rh5+ Kd6 65 Ke4 Ba5 66 Rh6+ Kd7 67 Rxh4 should be fairly straightforward once Black's last pawn falls] **61 Re6 h4 62 Re1** [If 62 Re8 Be5 63 Rf8+ Kg5 64 Ke4 Bc7 65 Rf7 Bd6 66 Rh7 Bg3 67 Rf7 I'd still have to work to



overcome Black's tough defense.] **62...Be5 63 Kg2 Kf6 64 Kh3 Bg3 65 Re8 Kf7?** [Keeping my king out of the game by 65...Kf5 would have been much more tenacious, although objectively insufficient. 66 Re2 Kg5 67 Rd2 Bd6 68 Rd1 Kf5 69 Kxh4 Ke5 70 Kg4 Bb4 71 Kh5 Ba3 72 Kg6 Bf8 73 Kf7 Bb4 74 Ke8 Kd6 75 Kd8 Ba5+ 76 Kc8 Bc3 77 Kb7 Be5 78 Kb6 Bf4 79 Kb5 Kc7 80 Kc4] Once my king guards the pawn I should be able to win.] **66 Re6!** [Now it's pretty easy thanks to Black's passive king. I will march my king to the d-pawn.] **66...Bf2 67 Kg4 Bg3 68 Kf5 h3 69 Rh6 h2 70 Rh7+ Kg8 71 Rh3** [a slight waste of time that doesn't spoil anything] **71...Kf7 72 Rh7+ Kg8 73 Kg6 Bb8 74 Rh5 Kf8** [74... Bf4 75 Kf6 Bg3 76 Ke6—once my king gets here the game is over] **75 Kf6 Ke8 76 Ke6 1-0**



Social
Distancing

A Bit of Historical Perspective Regards the Immortal Game

by Andy Rea

VIRGINIA CHESS 2020/#2 presented a detailed look at Adolf Anderssen's 1852 "Evergreen Game" versus Jean Dufresne. Anderssen's resume included another game that has been accorded a name, the so called "Immortal Game" against Lionel Kieseritzky played in 1851: 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Bc4 Qh4+ 4 Kf1 b5 5 Bxb5 Nf6 6 Nf3 Qh6 7 d3 Nh5 8 Nh4 Qg5 9 Nf5 c6 10 g4 Nf6 11 Rg1 cxb5 12 h4 Qg6 13 h5 Qg5 14 Qf3 Ng8 15 Bxf4 Qf6 16 Nc3 Bc5 17 Nd5 Qxb2 18 Bd6 Bxg1 19 e5 Qxa1+ 20 Ke2 Na6 21 Nxf7+ Kd8 22 Qf6+ Nxf6 23 Be7mate 1-0

WHEN IT COMES to 19th century chess classics, we sometimes think of the lesser names as barely better than Colonel Moreau. In fact, most of these players had more than a decent game. We must allow that they played without the backing of years of later



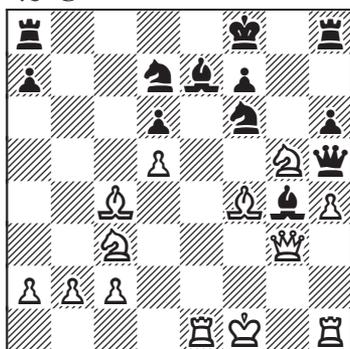
discoveries! Anyway the following game was also played in London, 1851. An offhand game, it was not from the first-ever international tournament. Lionel Kieseritsky shows he has more going for him than naming rights to a variation in the Kings Gambit.

Adolf Anderssen - Lionel Kieseritzky

London 1851

King's Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Bc4 Qh4+ 4 Kf1 b5 [Okay, it is the 1850s...] 5 Bxb5 Nf6 6 Nf3 Qh6 7 Nc3 c6 8 Bc4 d6 9 d4 Be6 10 d5 cxd5 11 exd5 Bg4 12 g3 g5 [They might not be positional maestros but they surely did not lack for fighting spirit. Who cares about king safety if you get there first!?] 13 h4 Qh5 14 Qe1+ Be7 15 Nxc3 fxg3 16 Bf4 Kf8 17 Qxg3 Nbd7 18 Re1 h6



The key position. White just cannot resist temptation. A few decades later, White captures on d6. But that was not the norm for 19th century chess, aside from Morphy and maybe Steinitz.

19 Rxe7?! hxg5 20 Bxd6 Kg7 [Black is not too cavalier about king safety.] 21 Be5 gxh4 22 Qf4 Rae8 23 Ne4 Rxe7 24 Bxf6+ Nxf6 25 Qxf6+ Kf8 26 Ng3 Qh6 27 Qxh6+ Rxh6 28 Kg2 Re3 29 Nf1 h3+ 30 Kh2 Rf3 31 Bd3 f5 32 Kg1 f4 33 Rh2 Rh5 34 Be4 Rg3+ 35 Nxc3 fxg3 36 Rd2 Re5 37 Bd3 Re1+ 38 Bf1 Bf3 0-1 And a few months later, another social game between these two players that had a more famous result! But I'll say it: Kieseritsky was not a schlub!



Perhaps now Black noticed that if 60...c1Q 61 Rxd7 threatens Qg6+! He would have to continue 61...Rxd7 62 Rxd7 Qxd7 63. Qxd7+ Kf8... Perpetual check? Actually it's worse than that. White would inevitably fork the other rook, eg 64 Qd8+ Kg7 (64...Kf7 65 Qd5+) 65 Qe7+ Kh8 66 Qf8+ Kh7 67 Qf7+ with winning chances in the resulting queen endgame.

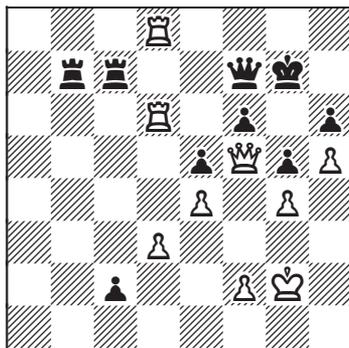
Our sympathies naturally tend towards Black. He doesn't deserve to lose based on what we've seen thus far, right? Justice demands that there be another move, and indeed von Bardeleben found one.

60...Rbb7! *{diagram}*

Everything seems back in order...

61 d4!

What is this? More annoying complications? Von Bardeleben must have felt tempted just to plunk a new queen on c1 and sort the rest out next turn. (I wonder if three moves earlier he'd



executed the in-your-face gesture of borrowing a second queen from a neighbor's chess set.) But what the heck, with time on our clock we may as well calculate. Let's try to read von Bardeleben's thoughts...

Let me see... 61...c1(Q) 62 dxe5 Surely White is threatening something. And I don't have any checks. I guess I've got to play 62...Qa1 (or 62...Qb2, no difference). It's a pity having to defend with an extra queen, though. But no point in pouting about that, let's continue: 63 exf6+ Qaxf6 64 Rxf6. Gosh, he's threatening 65 Rxf7+ Rxf7 66. Qg6mate Okay, so 64...Qxf6 is forced. But wait, no! Then he will play 65 Rg8+ Kxg8 66 Qxf6 and I lose all my pawns! Well, I could play the groveling 66...Rh7, but yuck... and I'd probably lose in the long run anyway. Witchcraft! What sin did I commit to deserve this?

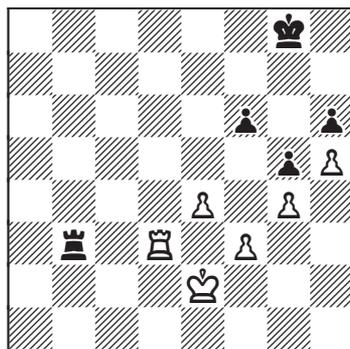
At length he played **61...Re7 Sigh... 62 Rc8 Rbc7** Maybe this will help? **63 dxe5** No such luck. **64 exf6+** is a big threat, and **63...fxe5 64 Rg6+** is out. **63... Rxe5 64 Rxc7** Von Bardeleben sheepishly returns the borrowed extra queen and advise his friend to go ahead get lunch without him as he may be a while.



64...Rxf5 65 Rxf7+ Kxf7 66 Rc6 Re5 67 f3

A pawn down. As readers, our loyalties are prone to dissolve with Black's prospects. *What do you mean "we," Herr von Bardeleben?*

Happily, however, I can report that in the end the German master managed alright without us. One must admire his resolve after what must have been a bitter disappointment. **67...Ra5 68 Rxc2 Ra3 69 Kf2 Rb3 70 Ke2 Ra3 71 Rc7+ Kg8** Obviously he must guard h6. **72 Rd7 Rb3 73 Rd3** so as to advance his king. White appears to be making progress, but Black was alert! *{diagram}*

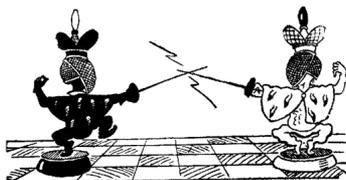


73... Rxd3! Most unusual in this kind of position. **74 Kxd3 Kf7 75 Kd4 Ke6**

The possibility of penetrating into f4 is what gives Black sufficient counterplay. This position would be drawn with either White or Black to move. **76 e5** What else? **fxe5+ 77 Ke4 Kf6.** [It's worth mentioning that **77...Kf7?** would spoil everything because of... **78 Kf5!**]

78 Kd5 Kf7 79 Kxe5 Ke7 80 Kd5 Kd7 ½-½

In the final position **81 Ke5 Ke7 82 f4 gxf4 83 Kxf4 Kf6** is the trival road to a draw. The only other "try" **81 f4?!** would be a most impractical as after **81...gxf4 82 g5 hxg5 83 h6 f3 84 h7 f2 85 h8Q f1Q 86 Qg7+ Ke8** it's Black who reassumes the role of torturer. For starters there is a transparent trap **87 Qxg5? Qb5+**. The correct **87 Qg6+** affords one final instructive moment. **87...Qf7+ 88 Qxf7+ Kxf7** and the blitz chess instinct might be the careless **89 Ke5?** which loses to **89...Kg6 90 Ke4 Kh5 91 Kf3 Kh4 92 Kg2 Kg4**. This is a case where retreat is essential: **89 Ke4! Kg6 90 Kf3 Kh5 91 Kg3** with a draw.





Legendary Morphy Artifact Found in Virginia

by John T Campbell

SHORTLY AFTER THE ONSET of the American Civil War, in October 1861, Paul Morphy visited Richmond. It has long been assumed that Morphy, recently returned from his chess triumphs in Europe, came to the Confederate capital to offer his services to General Pierre G T Beauregard, a family friend (although Morphy had previously espoused some pro-union sentiments).

It is known that Morphy visited the Richmond Chess Club on October 24, winning eight of ten games at knight odds. Some years later, State Chess Association of Virginia president Gilbert R Frith related that Morphy also attended a dinner with other local players at the Richmond home of Reverend R R Howison, and that during the meal Morphy's attention was drawn to a picture on the wall of a young man playing chess versus Mephistopheles. The youth had the White pieces (styled as Virtues) in a desperate-looking position. The Devil was depicted as gloating behind a perceptibly greater Black (Vices) army. Nevertheless Morphy, after studying the position, declared that he could take the young man's side and win. The consensus of those present was that not even Morphy could retrieve White's game, but when a board and pieces were produced he made good on his boast.

The tale is well-circulated. David Lawson's authoritative *Paul Morphy, The Pride & Sorrow of Chess* gives an account of Morphy's visit to Richmond (pp 267-269), including this anecdote. Bradley Ewart presented a detailed study in *Chess Life* ("The Devil and Paul Morphy", June 1984). However, the whole affair has also been dismissed as apocryphal in the absence of corroborative evidence. Thus historian Frank Skoff stated flatly in the November 1992 *Chess Life*: "The anecdote re the famous Retzsch etching is mythical (Man is a myth-making animal)."



With a small amount of detective work, I unearthed the actual picture and its connection with the Howison family several years ago. Recently [1994–ed] I retraced my investigation for the purposes of this article. The picture, which is reproduced here, resides in a private home in Fredricksburg, Virginia. It is in fact a lithograph, a variant of an original by Moritz Retzsch. The owners have verified that they are descendants of Rev Howison, that the Morphy story is familiar to them as part of their family lore, and that theirs is indeed the actual graphic upon which Morphy gazed. While they request that their privacy be honored, their name and address not made public at this time, they did permit several photographs of the lithograph including close-ups of the board and pieces.





The version of the tale accepted within the Howison family differs slightly from the popular legend. Rather than “defending the young man’s position”, Morphy is said to have played several games from a position *based upon* the lithograph as a form of handicap. That is, as a change of pace from his usual custom of conceding rook, queen or other material odds in the normal starting position, Morphy concocted an odds-giving position resembling that in the picture. His fellow dinner guests took turns trying out the Black (superior) side against the champion. There is no indication how Morphy performed win/loss -wise in the face of this handicap.

Through the years, scholars have offered different interpretations of the chess position in the Retzsch original. It’s no easy task because the pieces are stylized and not readily equated to familiar chess pieces, plus the view angle makes it hard to be certain which squares they occupy. My discovery of the ‘authenticated’ Morphy lithograph could rekindle speculation, although the issue loses much of its significance if we accept the Howison family version of the tale, there being no claim that Morphy defended the exact position depicted. In any case, the now-established fact that Howison family descendants possess such a lithograph argues that the “Devil and Paul Morphy” legend has its basis in truth.

This article originally appeared in the November/December 1994 VIRGINIA CHESS -ed



The Wilbur Moorman Trophy (pictured) is engraved with the names of all Virginia State Champions since the founding of the Virginia Chess Federation in 1934.

Notes regarding the list on opposite page:

- (i) no tournament was held during war years 1943-5
- (ii) co-champions recognized in 1951 as part of transition from 'open' to a 'closed' championship



Virginia State Champions

1934	John N Buck	1978	Donald Barr
1935	W W Gibbs	1979	Donald Barr
1936	John D Matheson	1980	Donald Connors
1937	W W Gibbs	1981	Richard Delaune
1938	W F O'Hara	1982	William Robinson
1939	W W Gibbs	1983	Edward Kitces
1940	John N Buck	1984	Errol Liebowitz
1941	Edgar McCormick	1985	Richard Delaune
1942	L Russell Chauvenet	1986	Edward Kitces
1946	L Russell Chauvenet	1987	Geoff McKenna
1947	L Russell Chauvenet	1988	Geoff McKenna
1948	L Russell Chauvenet	1989	Walter Morris
1949	Leonard Helman	1990	Eugene Meyer
1950	Leonard Helman	1991	Bill Mason
1951	Rodney Baine	1992	John Russell Potter
	Walter Bass	1993	Macon Shibus
1952	Herbert Avram	1994	Joseph Feygelson
1953	Herbert Avram	1995	Geoff McKenna
1954	Herbert Avram	1996	Geoff McKenna
1955	Leonard Morgan	1997	Steve Greanias
1956	E O Godbold	1998	E Rodney Flores
1957	Irwin Sigmund	1999	Macon Shibus
1958	Irwin Sigmund	2000	Daniel Miller
1959	Andrew Schoene	2001	Rusty Potter
1960	Owen E Miller	2002	Macon Shibus
1961	Irwin Sigmund	2003	Daniel Miller
1962	Lawrence King	2004	Daniel Miller
1963	Henry Steinbach	2005	Daniel Miller
1964	Charles Powell	2006	Andrew Samuelson
1965	Charles Powell	2007	Edward Lu
1966	Charles Powell	2008	Adithya Balasubramanian
1967	Charles Powell	2009	Andrew Samuelson
1968	R S Callaghan Jr	2010	Dov Gorman
1969	Rusty Potter	2011	James Schuyler
1970	Ed Kitces	2012	James Schuyler
1971	Charles Powell	2013	Daniel Miller
1972	Charles Powell	2014	James Schuyler
1973	Steven Bookbinder	2015	Jennifer Yu
1974	Richard Delaune	2016	Qindong Yang
1975	Richard Delaune	2017	Praveen Balakrishnan
1976	Charles Powell	2018	Praveen Balakrishnan
1977	Alan Rufty	2019	Daniel Miller

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