Legacy Mares
HY CREST SATINA
The Source of Color in Most of Today's Gray Morgans

By Laura Hornick Behning

What is it about gray horses that so captures our imagination? Is the attraction a legacy of our youth—memories of old Western movies where the "good guy" wore white and rode a white horse? Is it a mystical connection, reminiscent of the mythical unicorn and Pegasus? Is it the aura of something rare and unusual? For Morgan breeders interested in color, gray in our breed is all of those things and more!

Though there was a handful of gray Morgans registered in the early volumes of the Registry, historically speaking it never seemed to be a popular color, most likely because of one simple fact: light colored horses show dirt. In the early twentieth century as Morgans transitioned from predominantly working animals to being bred for the show ring, dark colors continued to be preferred. By the late 1980s, the gray color in our breed was hovering near extinction, with just six living individuals.

It's interesting how fate plays into our lives. In the spring of 1987, Carol Guay of Dryden, Michigan was helping her sister look for a horse to ride and drive. Though not a Morgan owner at the time, Carol had an interest in the breed, so the ladies followed up on an ad about a Morgan mare for sale. There was one problem—the mare, registered as Hy Crest Satina, was gray. Carol's sister did not want a "white" horse because they were too hard to keep clean. But Carol was enchanted by Satina's beauty, sweet disposition and friendliness. She ended up purchasing Satina, then 18 years old, for herself. She had no idea what a rare find she now had in her possession.

Fast forward about a year. Carol received a phone call from breed historian Laura Stillwell, who was researching an article on gray Morgans for *The Morgan Horse* magazine. Laura recalls, "For reasons now long forgotten, I had gotten curious about gray Morgans; were there still any in the breed? I queried Jamie [*Jamie*

Above, left and right: ***Hy Crest Satina****, 1969 gray mare owned by Carol Guay, shown here with her 1990 son,* ***CW's Sterling Silver****. This mare is almost single-handedly responsible for the salvation of the modern gray Morgan.* (Photos courtesy of Carol Guay [left] & Roxanne Riggs [right])

(Photo © Shane Shiflet)

(Photo © Terry Young)

SONS OF HY CREST SATINA. Top to bottom: ***Jasons Jay Byrd****, a 1983 gray gelding, shown by Jeanne Masters;* ***CW's Sterling Silver****, a 1990 gray stallion, was the first of two gray stallions who have carried on for their dam;* ***CW's Silver Ash****, a 1993 gray stallion, was Satina's final offspring. Shown here at the 2007 Morgan Masterpiece show, Jordy Johns up.*

Bloomquist, then—editor of The Morgan Horse] and he got me a list of the currently registered gray Morgans. It was a very short list. I wrote a letter to each of the owners on that list. Some letters came back as undeliverable, and some just disappeared with no answer. Two were answered. One was from the owner of a gelding. The other was Carol with Satina, who had a black foal at side that year. Carol had not planned on breeding her again as she was up in years. I wrote Carol back to tell her it looked like she had the last breedable gray Morgan in the world."

Laura's article "There Really Are Gray Morgans" appeared in the August 1988 issue of *TMH*. It was a turning point for Carol—and for the survival of the gray Morgan. Carol decided to continue breeding Satina, hopeful of getting a gray son or daughter from her. While another line of gray Morgans, from the mare Saycrest Frosty Miss, would ultimately be recovered and bred on, the vast majority of gray Morgans today trace their color lineage to Hy Crest Satina.

Satina's sire was Hy Crest Koko, a pretty headed bay stallion of Lippitt and Upwey Ben Don breeding. He stood at Hy Crest Morgans in Brighton, MI, owned by Richard and Sylvia Measel of Brighton, MI, who were Satina's breeders. Satina's gray gene comes from her dam, Lady Satin. Lady Satin's gray dam, Babe, foaled in 1935 or 1936, was bred by the Miles City, MT US Livestock Experiment Station. Babe was by the government-bred Monterey (Mansfield x Scotanna) and out of a gray remount mare (said to be by a gray Arabian).

A typey, good-sized Morgan at 15.1 hands, "Tina" had five foals before Carol's ownership, two of which were gray: the 1975 stallion Wetacres Grey Bomber (who left no progeny) and the 1983 gelding Jason's Jay Byrd, who had unfortunately been gelded as a yearling. Thankfully, despite her age, Satina had no trouble conceiving again. The mare's first two foals for Carol were non-gray, but the third time was the charm when CW's Sterling Silver (by Todita) was born in 1990. In 1993, when Satina was 24, her last foal arrived. This was the gray stallion CW's Silver Ash (by Hillside Stoney Ash). These two gray sons of Satina have carried the gray Morgan population into much healthier numbers, which continues to grow with each passing year.

NUMBER ONE GRAY SON: CW'S STERLING SILVER

"CW" as he was known to his friends (the CW stands for Cross Winds Farm, Carol's program), was a substantial, good-sized stallion with excellent movement. He also had a fun-loving personality. "He loved to play with things in his pasture," Carol remembers. "He would bring his ball back to you if it was thrown. He was easy to handle, in and out of the breeding area, and was kind to his mares. He passed on this great personality along with good Western working genes to his offspring, and his color too, most of the time!" For four years (2000-2004) CW spent some time on a lease out west, producing two grays during that time, the 2003 mare Arapaho Grace (x Arapaho Leah) owned by Timothy and Virginia Reeser, Columbiana, OH, and the 2002 stallion Arapaho Frosty (x Collier's Oriana), owned by the Arapaho Ranch. When he returned home again to Michigan, Carol turned him out with

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DESCENDANTS OF CW'S STERLING SILVER. Top to bottom: ***CW's Silver Dollar,*** *a 1994 gray stallion;* ***CW's Specialeditionsilver,*** *a 2000 homozygous gray stallion.*

several of the mares he had previously lived with. Unfortunately, one of the mares kicked him, breaking his hip. "He spent five weeks in a stall and got very depressed," Carol says. "He stopped eating, so his healing process was long and hard for both of us. He did heal, but had a stiffness and drug his left hind leg a little." After a couple of winters, the leg was getting worse, so Carol made the difficult decision to put CW down in 2009. He was only 19. Thankfully he left ten gray offspring (one gelding and the rest stallions and mares), who continue to carry the gray Morgan into the future.

CW's first gray son was CW's Silver Dollar (x Tonya), owned by Carrie Hazel of Hazel Run Morgans in MT. Among Dollar's notable gray offspring is the beautiful and versatile stallion TFM Sky Walker, owned by Bob and Marge Thomas of Thomas Family Morgans in Ontario. In 2006, "Luke" won his first 25-mile Endurance ride and placed well in a 40-mile ride as well. He was Ontario Morgan Classic Reserve Grand Champion Stallion, Reserve Champion Novice Carriage and Champion Working Hunter; and at his first CDE, he placed second in the training division. He also won the training division of the 2007 OCDA Dressage Derby. "Luke" has also done public appearances promoting the breed at horse expos and fairs. Truly an example of Morgan versatility at its best!

Celeste Brown's Pine Meadow Farm in Ft. Edward, NY is home to the largest group of grays in the Morgan breed. Celeste had purchased a cremello colt from Roxanne Riggs' SFG Morgans in Michigan in the summer of 2001, and in ensuing conversations Roxanne mentioned Carol and her grays. Intrigued, Celeste went with Roxanne to visit Carol and ended up purchasing two grays, the stallion CW's Silverwood (CW's Silver Dollar x Del-View Heidi) and the mare CW's Silver Coin (CW's Sterling Silver x Tonya) in 2002. Sadly, Silver Coin passed away much too young, but not before leaving the breed a gray daughter, Aikane's Plenty Of Sparkle (by Whirlwind's Morning Star), owned by Janine Jeffers of Townshend, VT, in addition to the first homozygous gray Morgan in the breed, the stallion CW's Specialeditionsilver (by CW's Silver Ash). Celeste purchased several more grays from Carol in 2004, including CW's Silver Dollar himself, and CW's Silver Surprize (CW's Silver Dollar x Chameleon Ms Liberty), a rare buckskin gray foaled in 2001. Surprize produced three gray fillies for Pine Meadow Farm before moving to her current home at Mia-Mar Morgans in Canada last year. Celeste breeds for the sport horse disciplines, with an emphasis on good size and bone. Utilizing crosses to proven sport breeding through the stallions Rosevale Leggo and DJJJ Star's Ace, many of her younger grays are at or close to 16 hands. A move to Texas is in the works for Pine Meadow Farm, which Celeste notes will land her much closer to Oklahoma City and the Grand National, where she plans to show her grays.

Mentioned earlier, one of the most significant gray offspring of CW's Silver Dollar is his homozygous for gray son, CW's Specialeditionsilver (x CW's Silver Coin), owned by Arika Eggleston of KDA Morgans in Ady, WA. Arika purchased Special as an unstarted seven-year-old. "When I began my search for a gray Morgan of quality I decided to go directly to the source, which everyone knows was this woman in Michigan—Carol Guay," Arika explains. "Then with no email communication, just a few phone

(Photo © Bob Moseder)

DESCENDANTS OF CW'S STERLING SILVER PART II. **Left to right:** ***CW's Silverwood,*** *a 1999 gray stallion, with Celeste Brown;* ***TFM Sky Walker,*** *a 2000 gray stallion, shown here driven by Laurie Willert.*

calls and photos mailed, we agreed that I would lease a stallion to see how he produced and start his training. When 'Special' arrived he was gorgeous, very correct and typey! Right away I started him in a training program to test his temperament and athleticism. He passed all of the tests here with flying colors and we started breeding with him—and I bought him. I think Special is a pretty significant testimony to Carol's breeding program."

Gray Morgans now have traveled overseas, too! Rounding out the list of CW's Silver Dollar offspring is his 2008 son MEMC Earl Grey. He became the first gray Morgan in Europe when he was sold in utero with his dam, SFG Passion Flower, to Monika Drevermann in Nuembrecht, Germany.

If you have seen a gray Morgan in the show ring recently, chances are it was Winter Moon Enlightenment (CW's Sterling

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(Photo © Debbie Uecker-Keough)

WINTER MOON ENLIGHTENMENT & HIS OFFSPRING. **Top row:** ***Winter Moon Light Kiss,*** *a 2001 gray mare, owned and ridden by Jeanne Masters;* ***Firecrest Santa Fe,*** *a 2001 gray stallion, performing a liberty demonstration with Joe Wiggins;* ***Winter Moon Enlightenment,*** *a 1995 gray stallion, owned and ridden by Jeanne Masters at the 2011 Nebraska Horse Expo.* **Bottom row:** ***RDK's Knight Hawk,*** *a 2003 gray stallion;* ***Winter Moon Phenomenon,*** *a 2003 gray gelding, ridden by Danielle Stuerman at the 2011 Grand National;* ***SNR Steel Blue Magnolias,*** *a 2000 gray stallion, shown here at the 2008 Morgan Grand National by Meredith Rosier.*

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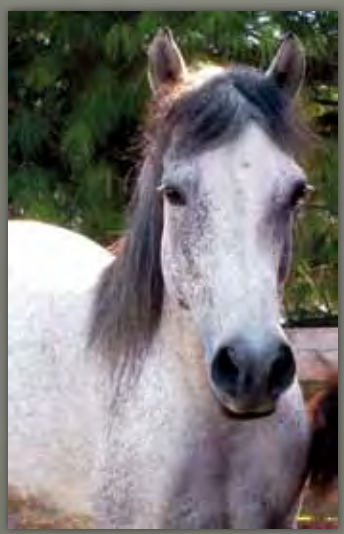
DESCENDANTS OF FAYRE OWEN. **Left to right:** ***FPS Frosted Creme Brulee****, a 2006 palomino-based gray mare;* ***Marana Thunder****, a 2010 buckskin-based gray mare, pictured as a yearling.*

Silver x Season's Ebony Lark) or one of his offspring. Enlightenment, foaled in 1995 and owned and bred by Jeanne Masters of Winter Moon Morgans in NE, has enjoyed a show career which has spanned two decades. From pleasure driving, Western pleasure to reining, in open as well as all-Morgan competition, Enlightenment has done it all. As a sire, he has produced several western pleasure winning grays, including the mares Winter Moon Light Kiss and Shermandell Alborak (both owned by Jeanne Masters) and the stallion SNR Steel Blue Magnolias, or "Clark" as he is known to his friends, owned by Rob and Sheila Franklin and trained by Meredith Rosier. Enlightenment's gelding son, Winter Moon Phenomenon (x Dream Acres Sweetcaroline) owned by Marla Stuerman of Shawnee, KS has been an excellent competitor in the youth reining division, most recently with Marla's daughter Danielle. The pair won the 2011 Grand National Reining Non-Pro Youth and were second in the Grand National Reining Green Rider Finals. Enlightenment is also the sire of the breeding stallion RDK's Knight Hawk (x Blacksaddle Jasmine), recently purchased by Angela Ong of Mineral Valley Morgans in Olympia WA. Carrying on the family lines is Knight Hawk's son RDK's Quick Silver (x Hesperia's Cameo Ash) who is standing at Kathy Clemens' Bar J 3 Ranch in ID.

Lately, one of the most talked about grays is the Winter Moon Enlightenment son Firecrest Santa Fe (x Amigo Alexis), owned by Stephen Finch. "Alydar," nicknamed after the famous racehorse of the same name, had been trained by Jean Sauer as a young horse, but then spent many years in a field doing nothing. At nine years of age he began training for driving and liberty with the Wiggins family of WW Training and shortly thereafter was purchased by Mr. Finch. "Alydar began to do so well with his work at liberty that Steve decided he wanted him to go public to demonstrate his unique capabilities," Joe Wiggins explains. "We traveled down to Oregon for the OMHA parade of stallions where Alydar performed his first public musical freestyle at liberty to the encouraging cheers of the audience. He then went to the PNW show in Spanaway Washington where he did an excellent job through the obstacle driving course and then did yet another musical freestyle at liberty. He then took on the role of demonstration and schooling horse in his first clinic, helping people learn how to have two-way communications with horses. Alydar also learned to act the part of a gentleman during breeding. He learned to wait patiently, tease on command, and not mount the mare until an ok was given—all without having any physical attachment such as a halter or lead rope." Videos of Firecrest Santa Fe performing at liberty are available on YouTube, and they showcase his impressive level of training. This beautiful gray stallion's public appearances have done much to promote the Morgan throughout the Pacific Northwest.



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DESCENDANTS OF CW'S SILVER ASH. Left to right: ***CW's Sweet Silver**, a 2000 gray mare; **Silverstone Firefly Ash**, a 2004 gray mare; **Aikane MuchAdoAboutSilver**, a 2010 gray mare, shown here by owner Celeste Brown.*

Fayre Owen (CW's Sterling Silver x Etoile de Fayre), foaled in 1996, stands at Vicky McKane's Frog Pond Stables in Sherwood, NY and has produced several good gray mares who have gone on to produce more grays for other breeding programs. FPS Frosted Creme Brulee (x Amberfields Carmel Mist), a palomino gray, foaled the first known perlino gray, Marana Olympus (by Dahlonega Dillon) in 2010 for his excited owner Marilyn Vander Wekken of Marana Morgans in Picture Butte, AB. FPS Lilys Fayre Alabaster (x FPS Honey's Klondike Lily) and FPS Fayre GreyHoneyVelvet (x Coal Creek Brown Honey) were both recently purchased by Angela Ong of Olympia WA after foaling gray offspring for Amberfields Morgans and Marana Morgans respectively. Those

offspring, both gray stallions, are the homozygous for gray Amberfields Steel Magnum (SNR Steel Blue Magnolias x FPS Lilys Fayre Alabaster), owned by Amberfields Morgans in West Edmeston, NY, and Marana Thunder (Dahlonega Dillon x FPS Fayre GreyHoneyVelvet), a buckskin gray owned by Gary Seibert of Jellico Morgans in Shelbyville KY. Thunder's purchase was the result of Gary's lifelong dream to have a gray Morgan. "Sometimes we just do things for the fun of it and get the most enjoyment," Gary says. "He was just a dream come true."

Another notable son of CW's Sterling Silver is the 2000 stallion Sc Island Silverado (x Gremarbin Arabesque), owned by Sherry Siebenaler and Helga Loncosky of Beacon Morgans in Catawissa, PA. He has sired four grays so far—two mares and two stallions. His daughters are Beacon Silver Dawn (x State Line Miz Snippet) owned by Windridge Morgans in Salmon, ID and Beacon Silver Luminesse (x Northerly Lumina), owned by Linda Karchner in Nescopek, PA. Silverado's sons are Beacon Silverado's Magic (x Northerly Katerina) owned by Julie Heise of Rosewater Farm in Watertown, WI, and Beacon Silver Miracle (out of Nemours Maribeau), owned by Vali and Jim Suddarth of Missouri Morgans in Montreal, MO. Silver Miracle is gaited and is siring gaited offspring, opening up a whole new market for the gray Morgan!

CW'S SILVER ASH

In all the years that Anne Canavan had owned horses she never owned a gray, but had always wanted one. In 1999, Anne's husband Jim saw a stallion ad for CW's Sterling Silver. The couple took one of their mares up to Carol's to be bred. "There was a gray son of CW's Sterling Silver called CW's Silver Dollar, as well as Hy Crest Satina, and two gray fillies. I couldn't believe my eyes—six grays shimmering silver in the sunlight," Anne remembers. One other gray captured their attention. His name was CW's Silver Ash, and he was for sale. "I couldn't believe my luck to be able to buy Ash and bring him to Tennessee," Anne says. "On the ride home from Michigan with Ash in the trailer, I kept looking back, not really believing he was ours and coming home with us!"

Sired by the Lippitt stallion Hillside Stoney Ash, CW's Silver Ash had not been trained when the Canavans acquired him as a six-year-old. But in typical Morgan fashion, he quickly took to training. Ash was driving in two weeks, and being ridden in a month. In 2007 he was shown in the Western pleasure division by Jordy Johns. "This was such a tribute to his disposition," Anne says. "He had been a breeding stallion running with mares most of his life. His foals have this same kind and easy going disposition."

Ash's gray offspring are not as numerous as his half-brother's, but several have found their way into colorful Morgan breeding programs. His sons include the previously mentioned stallion CW's Specialeditionsilver (out of Tonya), owned by KDA Morgans in Washington and Silverstone Pepper Ash (x Nel J Steppin Lady), who was successfully shown in Western pleasure

for owner Sharon Keller. Ash's daughters can be found in several colorful Morgan breeding programs. Silverstone Firefly Ash (x Triple S Firefly) went to Canada to join the broodmare band at Lyle and Cindy's Dietz's Coulee Bend Morgans, and has been successfully shown in open Western pleasure classes. CW's Silver Ashley (out of Del View Heidi), owned by Carol Guay, is the dam of homozygous gray CW's Totally Silver. CW's Sweet Silver (x CW's Silver Sundae) is a broodmare for Roxanne and Jean Riggs' SFG Morgans in Commerce Township, MI. The Riggs are good friends of Carol's and have had an interest in gray Morgans for many years. Roxanne says, "We were impressed by Satina's son, CW's Silver Ash, who had lots of Lippitt breeding behind him, and ended up purchasing a yearling gray mare from Carol in 2001. CW's Sweet Silver (CW's Silver Ash x CW's Silver Sundae) is one of the most beautiful and talented mares we have owned in 38 years with Morgans. She has been bred three times to our palomino stallion and foaled three gray foals for us so far. They have been stylish, trainable, and highly saleable."

The hallmark of CW's Silver Ash's foals, however, is their quality—regardless of color. One of Anne's customers, who bred her mare to Ash, said after seeing his foals: "Even if I don't get the color, it will still be a foal that I will want to keep." A higher compliment cannot be paid to any stallion!

The Silver Lining

When I started my research for this article, it really was amazing to discover just how far the gray Morgan has come in the 22 years since CW's Sterling Silver was born. I found so many gray descendants of Satina that I could not even begin to cover all of them. I suppose this is a good thing in light of the fact that gray Morgans very nearly went the way of the dodo! The breed owes a lot to Carol Guay—a woman with a mission, who has done so much for the preservation of the gray Morgan, despite adversity and prejudice. At an equine expo years ago, Carol gave her farm's business card to a lady. It was ripped up before Carol's eyes and thrown on the ground with the statement 'a gray cannot be a true Morgan horse.' Thankfully, in the 22 years since Satina foaled CW's Sterling Silver, grays have become more and more accepted amongst Morgan enthusiasts, along with the other color options found in our breed.

Hy Crest Satina never saw the inside of a show ring. In addition to her broodmare duties, she served as Carol's trusted trail mount—an honorable, if sometimes undervalued, occupation. Carol owned her for 13 years and the mare was always healthy and carried good weight. In December 2000, after a brief illness, Satina was laid to rest at age 31. Carol still misses her. But Satina is not truly gone. More than a decade after her passing, her numerous descendants carry on for her. In the reining pen, in the combined driving world, in show rings across America, in equine exhibitions and events of every flavor, and maybe most especially, on the trail with their delighted owners—gray Morgans are here to stay. ■