

Remembrances of Don McAllister's Impact on the ADS

The dahlia community was saddened to learn of Donald "Don" McAllister's passing in July 2021. For years, Don's participation in American Dahlia Society affairs was significant. He played a key role in moving the Society from, what some people call, the "stone age:" into the current "information age." If anyone was up to date with the technologies needed to get-the-word-out about dahlias, it was Don. The Colorado Dahlia Society has provided the Bulletin and the ADS website with an informative and fitting obituary. That tribute to Don is found in the December 2021 issue of the Bulletin. Thank you to all involved.

Don was active in ADS Board conference calls and his role on the ADS Board stirs remembrances. When our past and our current presidents were asked "what comes first to your mind when you think of Don McAllister?", their responses follow:

Mac Boyer. "I recall Don being a likeable guy. He was pro-ADS. When the ADS Board started having quarterly meetings in various regions of the U.S. and Canada, it was Don, amongst others, who encouraged the ADS to schedule meetings in Colorado. We had productive meetings there."

Harry Risetto. "For years Don pushed the ADS toward technological improvement. His ideas took years to execute, but Don was our leader, and he never gave up."

Ron Miner. "My thoughts go to the search system he maintained. Don was the guy who made it possible for many, many exhibitors find the dahlias they wanted to grow."

Don Dramstad. "Most memorable, was the ADS decided to buy him a new computer after all his troubles with his old one." (For sure, Don wore-out more than one computer in his day.)

Brad Freeman. "As digital technology was becoming mainstream in our lives Don was a big proponent to use it to promote the dahlia and enhance the benefits the members of American Dahlia Society received. The website for the Colorado Dahlia Society was a model for many dahlia organizations to use when developing their own websites. The American Dahlia Society would not be where it is today without Don's incessant calls to use the best digital technology available."

Jerry Landerholm. Don continually challenged the Board to address the shortcomings he perceived could hamper the Society from moving forward. I recall how tedious and drawn-out our Board conference calls became as Don hammered on us to embrace change. The ADS is strong because of its key contributors and Don was amongst those key people who understood that improvement meant continued success for the Society. The American Dahlia Society is better because of Don. Finally, Don was my friend, and I am comforted knowing he felt the same way.