

## Houston Area Daylily Society (Since 1964)

### Part I Highlights "In the Beginning"

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In May 1961, a group of Houston Hemerocallis Society (HHS) members decided they wanted to meet during the daytime, so a branch of the Houston Hemerocallis Society became organized as the Daylighters.

The following information was found by Ray Houston, Region 6 Archivist/Historian, in the Region 6 Newsletter, Summer 1961, and reported on January 19, 2012; "Houston has organized a new daytime group, with Miss Dorothy French as president. Many belong to both Societies but some will be reached that could not attend the meetings at night. We will expect a report from them in the Fall Newsletter." Newsletters for 1964 are not available at this time. In July 1964, the daytime group became an independent organization known as the Houston Area Daylily Society (HADS). The HADS Yearbook states the first President was Dolly Wheeler 1965-1966.

In 1981, HADS changed their calendar year to January 1 through December 31. Clarice Foster served as President from September 1, 1978, through December 31, 1980. Frances Schneider was the next president 1981-1982. Some folks were and are present members of both Societies.

In summary, the beginning of the group that became HADS was 1961. Thus, the foundation was in place for them to officially

become independent in 1964. Using 1964 as the official date means that in 2012 HADS is 48 years old. As historian I would suggest that a Fifty Year Anniversary should be in the planning stages soon to celebrate in style.

The Houston Hemerocallis Society and the Houston Area Daylily Society have a joint flower show each May. They take turns being the ones in charge of the schedule and planning the show with the other Society assisting.

From the pages of time and my memory some of the HHS President's gardens were on weekend tours. I remember visiting the Mildred Schlump and Carl Sauer gardens as a guest.

The following is offered as a background check on the origin of daylilies. The history of the daylily had its beginnings in Japan, China, and Korea where it was a native plant grown for beauty and medicinal use. Confucius (551-479 BC) writes of it. In 1688, Chen Hao-tzu describes it in a treatise. In 1753, Lennaeus in Europe called them "*Hemerocallis*". They came to America in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. *Hemerocallis fulva* was the tawny colored daylily and the *Hemerocallis flava* was the lemon colored daylily. The Japanese cultivar "Kwanzo" was growing in America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century American, Dr. Arlo B. Stout registered *Hemerocallis* '**Green Kwanzo**' (1917) and *H.* '**Variegated Kwanzo**' (1947).

The following was gleaned from the Internet; Dr. Arlow Stout worked 1911-1948 at the New York Botanical Garden and during 37 years of research crossed 50,000 daylilies. He registered 97 hybrids. Dr. Stout created the first red daylily. In

1950, AHS established an annual Stout Silver Medal Award in his honor. Dr. Stout was born in Albion, Wisconsin, March 10, 1876, and died in 1957. When in New York be sure and visit the Arlow B. Stout Garden at the New York Botanical Garden established in his memory in 1987. Also visit the library to see Dr. Stout's notes and watercolors.

AHS history is revealed in a Region 6 history by Lula Mae Purnell. It tells of a gathering of 5,000 flower lovers on July 13, 1946, at the Henry Field Seed Company which resulted in the formation of the Midwest Hemerocallis Society, being formed. On May 16-19, 1955 at the Convention in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the name was changed to the American Hemerocallis Society.

Check out the Region 6 website to see HADS History.