

My Daylily Legacy - People

by Ray Houston

When I became an AHS member and member of Region 6 in November 1984, I joined the organization because I was enthralled with the beauty of the daylilies I viewed at my first club meeting with the Brazosport Daylily Society, in Lake Jackson, Texas. Not long afterwards, I found that it was really the people in the Daylily World that were most intriguing to me.

Over the years, I have become acquainted with numerous interesting Daylily World personalities. Many of you who are younger or new to daylilies may have not had the privilege of meeting and knowing these people, as many of them are no longer living. You have missed a tremendous experience.

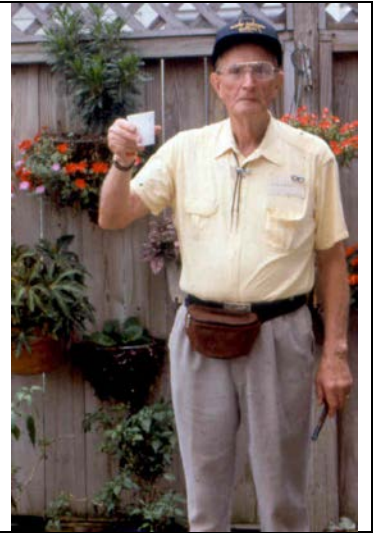
Many of the people I have met were not a single entity. Instead, they were a couple, each person of the couple complimenting the other.

Included here are my comments and memories about several people I have come to know and care for in Region 6.



Emily Everett (1921-1990), and her husband, W. D. "Chief" Everett (1919-2013), were the first people in the Daylily World with whom I became well acquainted. Emily was the Brazosport Daylily Society Librarian, and was the first person taking an interest in teaching me about daylilies. She loaded me down with Region 6 newsletters and AHS *Daylily Journals*. Emily was one of the most gracious, kindest ladies you could ever have the privilege of knowing.

W. D. was a complete opposite of Emily. He was a story teller and was good at telling yarns. He could make you laugh until you cried. Although W. D. appeared to have a gruff exterior, he was a man who was there for you and would do anything he could to help others.



Inez Tarrant (1919-2006), took my wife, Mary, and me under her wings to teach us all she could about growing and exhibiting beautiful daylilies. Inez's garden was the first daylily garden we had the privilege of visiting. Her garden was kept in immaculate condition. While walking around her garden, Inez would be talking and pulling dead leaves from her plants. Her daylily garden was how we thought an AHS Display Garden should look. Inez had a real knack of exhibiting prize winning daylilies at the flower shows and most often came away with a good portion of the awards. She taught many of us the proper way to groom and exhibit a prize winning daylily.

In 1993, Inez was honored as the recipient of the AHS Region 6 Service Award



I met Bill Ater (1930-2008), at the 1986 Region 6 Meeting in Austin, Texas. Bill was a storehouse of plant knowledge and was always willing to share his knowledge. He traveled all over Region 6 presenting programs to the Region's clubs on successful floral arrangement designs for flower shows. He was also a mentor for many AHS Exhibition Judges. He had an amazing ability to teach the basics and intricacies of daylily flower judging. My wife, Mary, and I continued to use many of Bill's techniques to teach other Judges.

Bill served as 1984-85 AHS President, and was honored as the 1996 Helen Field Fischer Gold Medal recipient. He was also honored as the recipient of the 1989 AHS Region 6 Service Award.



Ury Winniford (1908-2001), won the AHS Stout Silver Medal in 1980, for his 1969 daylily registration *Hemerocallis* '**Bertie Ferris**'. In 1983, Ury was honored as the recipient of the Bertrand Farr Silver Medal for his hybridizing achievements. He was always willing to share his knowledge about hybridizing daylilies with anyone who asked. It was not unusual to see Ury with multiple pollen anthers sticking out of his mouth like toothpicks when he was hybridizing. He would have pollen coating his fingers and as a consequence, everything he touched had pollen on it. It was very difficult for me to keep from laughing about the pollen that had been deposited on his face and ear lobes.

Ury was honored as the recipient of the 1979 AHS Region 6 Service Award.



Bertie Ferris (1906-1998), served as 1969 AHS President, and was honored as the recipient of the 1970 Helen Field Fischer Gold Medal. At the time of Bertie's death in 1998, there was no name better known in the American Hemerocallis Society than that of Bertie Ferris. It has been fondly said by many that Bertie was the "Grand Dame of AHS." Mary and I became acquainted with Bertie in 1987, when she convinced us that we should become AHS Exhibition Judges. When Bertie made her mind up to do something, there was not much one could do to convince her otherwise. Bertie "guided" us through the Exhibition Judges Clinics process and we passed the tests. Without Bertie's coaching, I never would have become an Exhibition Judge.

Bertie was honored as the recipient of the 1981 AHS Region 6 Service Award.



Virginia Henson (1921 - living), is one of those ladies whose presence leaves one with a pleasurable, lasting impression. We met Virginia and her husband, Ken, when we visited the Winniford-Henson-Ferris garden in Dallas. Ury Winniford, Ken Henson, and Bertie Ferris shared a plot on Ury's property, hybridizing and growing daylilies there.

In 1984, Virginia was elected to the AHS Board of Directors, where she served for six years as AHS Exhibitions Committee Chair, and was responsible for maintaining records for Exhibition Judges, Exhibition Show Reports, and coordination of Exhibition Judges Clinics. Virginia's reputation as an Exhibition Judges Clinic Instructor was well recognized, and she was kind and considerate in her dealings with students and instructors. In 1991, Virginia was honored as the recipient of the AHS Region 6 Service Award. In 2003, Virginia was honored as the recipient of the Helen Field Fischer Gold Medal.



J. L. Cruse (1916-1994), was a well-known Region 6 hybridizer. Daylily enthusiasts from all over the country paid annual visits to J. L.'s country garden located about halfway between Livingston and Woodville, Texas. This photo of J. L. was taken in 1986, and is the way J. L. greeted you as you entered his garden. He welcomed hundreds of guests to his garden wearing a straw hat, blue T-shirt, rope belt, and a pleasant smile. We will always remember J. L. making conversation while leaning on the handle of his shovel. On one of our yearly visits to his garden, J. L. told us to make ourselves at home in the garden, as he was too weak to escort us. He was deathly afraid of snakes and had just seen one in the garden, so he had taken a tranquilizer to calm his nerves. My wife, Mary, wanted to borrow one of his tranquilizers when she heard the word "snake!"

A good portion of J. L.'s daylilies were registered with the prefix "Gypsy" or "Little Gypsy." He had told us that he had Gypsy in his bloodline.



Albert "Bobo" Faggard (1928 - living), is an entertainer. For many years he dressed and acted as a clown to entertain children. With that same enthusiasm, he entertained adults. He was a major force in helping to build the Region 6 Treasury with his efforts as Auctioneer at Regional Meetings. He also served as Auctioneer in several AHS National Convention daylily auctions, keeping the auction moving and interesting, as he danced across the stage, attempting to get that last dollar for a daylily plant.

Bobo joined AHS in 1973. His interest in plant breeding led him to become an avid daylily breeder in 1976, and manager of the Brown Daylily Gardens at Orange, Texas, for Edgar and Betty Brown. Around 1980, Bobo began introducing their daylilies. Bobo has also registered over 80 of his own daylily creations.

In 1992, Bobo was honored as the recipient of the AHS Region 6 Service Award.



Jean Barnhart (1934-2016), was one of the toughest women I have ever met. Although she suffered from the effects of Lupus, she never seemed to slow down. She became serious about daylilies in the 1970s, after several trips to the gardens of Lucille Williamson and J. L. Cruse. She bought Lucille's garden stock in the late 1970s, then bought the contents of Bob Dove's garden in Pleasanton, Texas, when he retired from hybridizing.

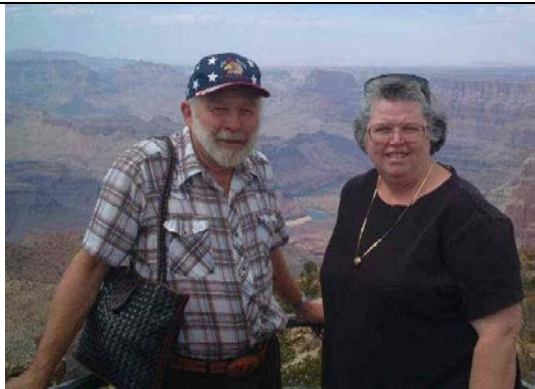
Jean joined AHS in 1984 and in 1985, was a founding member of the Nacogdoches Daylily Society.

In 1987, Jean and a friend purchased a dilapidated historic home in downtown Nacogdoches. They restored the building and in 1988, the Haden Edwards Bed and Breakfast Inn opened. The Inn is on the National Registry of Historical Homes. Mary and I visited Jean at the Inn and spent the night. She was such a gracious host and refused to allow us to pay for our stay.

Jean was one of the primary forces behind the establishment of the Stout Silver Medal Garden at Stephen F. Austin University, in Nacogdoches. Her work there exposed thousands of students and visitors to daylilies.

She served as 1996-99 Region 6 Garden Judges Liaison and taught AHS Garden Judges Workshops for many years.

In 2004, Jean was honored as the recipient of the AHS Region 6 Service Award.



Harvey and Nell Shimek are two of our very best friends. We met them in 1987 when their garden was on tour for the Region 6 Meeting.

We accompanied them on several trips into Louisiana to visit the daylily gardens of Elsie Spalding, Lucille Guidry, Rudy Pacas, and others. Harvey and Nell were from Louisiana, and as we travelled further into Louisiana, their speech became more and more Cajun.

Mary and I shared rooms with them at many Regional Meetings and National Conventions.

Harvey and Nell are AHS Senior Exhibition Judges and have judged daylily shows all over the United States and even in South America.

Their garden was an official AHS Display Garden from 1991 until the first part of 2016. Hundreds of people from all over the United States have visited their garden.

Both of them are experienced flower arrangers and have won many local club Tricolor Awards. Nell won the AHS Tricolor Award for her flower arrangements in 1990, 1992, 1995, and 1997. Harvey won the AHS Tricolor Award in 1999.

Nell has also won AHS awards for her photography. In 1990 and 1991 she won the AHS Mildred Schlumpf Landscape Photo Award. In 1991, 1993, and 1994 she won the AHS A. D. Roquemore Memorial Award for her photos of daylily clumps.

In 1996, they were founding members of the Lone Star Daylily Society, in Alvin, Texas.

In 2002, they were honored as the recipients of the AHS Region 6 Service Award.



Mary Smith (1918-2002), was one of the feistiest women I have ever met! Mary was quite a colorful character. Although, she was very assertive and out-spoken, she also had a kind and considerate spirit. Once you got past her gruff exterior, you learned to love Mary. I counted Mary as one of my friends.

Mary joined the San Antonio Daylily Society in 1976 and was a faithful member, contributing much to the club and to Region 6.

She was always one of the highest bidders in the Region 6 auctions. Before the auction, she would scope out the daylilies that were donated, deciding which ones she wanted to buy. You could not out-bid Mary when she decided to buy a daylily. In 1989, Nell Crandall donated a plant of her *Hemerocallis* '**Satan's Curls**' for the auction. When the bidding began, people started their usual low bidding, attempting to get a bargain. From the back of the room, Mary Smith shouted her bid, "Two Hundred Dollars." There was a gasp from the crowd. The auctioneer, after regaining his composure, asked if there were any other bids. There being none, Mary's \$200 bid purchased the daylily. At that time, \$200 was the highest bid the Region 6 auction had ever had. Mary immediately presented *H. 'Satan's Curls'* back to the auction and it was sold again, but not nearly at such a high bid. Mary did these zany kinds of things to support Region 6.

I have fond memories of all of these people and more whom I have met over the years as I travelled the Daylily World. It has been my pleasure to have known every one of them. I consider this my Daylily Legacy!