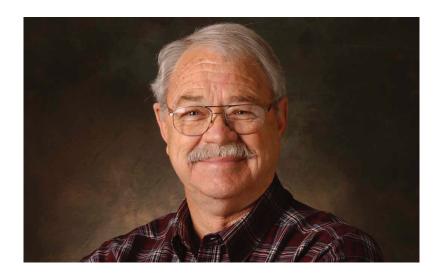


D'ALTON HOLDER PASSES AWAY AT THE AGE OF 82

By BLADE Staff -NOVEMBER 28, 2022



D'Alton Holder, whose knifemaking career spanned almost 60 years, served decades on the Knifemakers' Guild board of directors and enjoyed almost 20 years as a member of the BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall Of Fame®, passed away Nov. 19.

Known simply as "D'," Holder was a consummate maker of fixed-blade knives, especially hunters. Among the latter, his "My Knife" in a stacked handle of oosic and amber was probably his best-known model and one of the most recognizable knives of its time.

He made his first knife in 1966, selling mostly at gun shows until 1973 when he joined the Guild. He was elected as a Guild board director in 1976 and served on the board for 23 years, during which time he held every board position, including three terms as president. His leadership helped sustain the Guild through the early years of its existence.

Holder organized the Arizona Knifemakers Association in 1975 and was its president for five years. He received the Guild's Red Watson Award in 1982 and the American Firearms Industry Award of Merit in 1983, the only knifemaker to receive the honor. He was presented the Beretta Award for knifemaking excellence in 1994. He also served three years as president of the Arizona Knife Collectors Club.

He was a charter member of the board of regents of the American Knife & Tool Institute. Holder also was one of the winners of the 1998 Blade Magazine Publisher's Award for his efforts on behalf of the AKTI.

He taught dozens of knifemakers how to fashion knives and helped dozens of other makers become more accomplished at the craft.

D' was a very close friend of Cutlery Hall-Of-Famer Buster Warenski. When not making knives the two spent much time hunting and fishing together. In fact, D' lent a lot of support to Buster during the latter's making of the King Tut Dagger reproduction, probably the most famous knife of the modern custom era. Despite many delays caused by production problems and other setbacks, Buster finally finished the monumental project, much to D's delight. "With it, he stood head and shoulders above anything else that had been done," D' noted. "I think he did a better job than the original guys, the Egyptians!"

In his speech inducting Holder into the Cutlery Hall Of Fame at the BLADE® Magazine awards banquet of the 2003 BLADE Show, ABS master smith Tim Hancock, a long-time friend of the inductee's, may have said it best.

"His knives embody his philosophy of art and his dedication to great work and business ethics," Hancock said of D'. "He has no doubt made a friend of everyone he has sold a knife to.

"He also saw the need to shape the future of the industry that he loved. In his spare time, he has advised, helped, and counseled volumes of fellow knife enthusiasts, knife promoters, and budding knifemakers in their pursuits in this industry. To put it simply, those of us who know him personally would say that his most amazing trait is his unselfish devotion to helping others."

Arrangements to recognize D's passing were ongoing, though whether there will be any kind of memorial service for him was unclear as these words were being written.