
Dalton Prince--1920-2004



In Memory of Dalton B. Prince

1920 – 2004

by Art Smith

Dalton was the HGMS President in 1987. He is one of the most unpretentious people I have ever met. While President, he would have his men come to the clubhouse, clean it up, wax and polish the floor, and never say anything about it. I would notice it and say, "Things a little slow with your business?" "Not really," would be the answer. But he knew I was talking about the work at the clubhouse.

It took me months if not years to find out what his middle initial stood for. He thought that having the name of a famous movie star as his middle name was not right, at least for him.

In 1989 before he and Consie took Collector's Choice on the road so much, we were going to Arkansas as part of the Coon Creek Association. He enjoyed the collecting and the company as much as anyone, even though most of what we collected was microminerals. When he opened a large pocket at the Big Rock Quarry, the contents were shared by all. It was during those long trips up and back from Arkansas that I really got to know, respect, love, and appreciate him because we had nothing to do but talk about minerals and ourselves. We found that we were very different, not only in appearance but in about every way possible, but this only seemed to strengthen the respect and the bond between us.

Dalton got into minerals through Consie when they would drive into Mexico, often at Christmas time, to visit relatives there. He enjoyed the minerals, but what he enjoyed most were the people and the culture. Already a successful business man, he saw the opportunity to buy in Mexico and sell in Houston. He continued in his own business and became a partner with Consie in Collector's Choice. He liked nothing better than to buy a specimen that Consie was not fond of and then have it sold before some of her better, more attractive ones.

Dalton's love of travel, selling, and people prompted him to phase down his own business and with Consie to take Collector's Choice on the road. They made shows on both coasts. At Tucson he saw a dealer opening geodes with a pipe cutter in his booth and liked the idea even though the dealer was not selling a lot. He already had his own Mexican geodes, so he got a pipe-cutter and started opening them in the Collector's Choice booth. With his beard, battered hat, and wit, he was soon a feature attraction at shows they attended. You could always tell where the Collector's Choice booth was because Dalton

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always had a crowd around him at one end. He could have sold many more geodes than he did by speeding up his talk and actions, but no—he enjoyed making the people happy and made the opening of their geode a special experience. The buying of Chihuahuan geodes, carrying them to shows, and guaranteeing the geodes to be hollow made the profit margin small but to Dalton, the excitement of the people with their newly opened geode was most important. Early this year when he told me they would have to give up shows, I could sense the despair in his voice but with his bad knees and Consie's recent neck operation, it would have been impossible.

Most of us realize that we meet a lot of unforgettable and good people and become friends with them when we become part of the gem and mineral hobby. To me and many others, Dalton sits at the top of the list of these special people, and I have never doubted it the 30-plus years I have known him. So farewell good friend until we meet again someday, and I know we will.

Dalton is survived by Consie, his wife of over 43 years, three sons, a daughter, plus grandchildren and great grandchildren. Consie hopes to continue to run Collector's Choice from the shop at their home.

The portrait of Dalton on page 6 was provided by Inda Immega, and the picture of him breaking a geode was provided by Phyllis George. The photo on this page was provided by Ron Carman. Thank you all.

