

I, Dwight King, and the Dahlia Society of Victoria Committee, nominate Les Lawson for the 'Dahl' Award.

**Has contributed greatly to dahlias in Australia.**

Les Lawson is the longest continuous member of the Dahlia Society of Victoria (previously The National Dahlia Society of Victoria), a member for 58 years, a link back to the early days of the society. An enthusiastic grower and exhibitor Les is an active member who has served in many roles. Les has missed very few conference gatherings of the DSA (or previous entities), in fact was there from the beginning, often presenting at these gatherings and helping with organisation when Victoria hosted the conference. He has had connections with dahlia growers in other states, particularly through his time as editor of "Dahlias", the Victorian society's magazine. Service to the society, the dahlia and horticulture was recognised with the awarding of The Royal Horticultural Society's John Pascoe Fawkner Gold Medal in 2006.

**Promotes the dahlia.**

Les has promoted the dahlia with his work as editor, reporting, informing, inspiring and putting forward information from dahlia growers around Australia and the world. Les has given presentations at Australian Conferences, Victorian Country Conferences and at meetings. This season he has been presenting regular segments on the types of dahlias to the general meetings.

Les has worked on displays of dahlias at various events and has represented the society giving talks on dahlias to clubs.

**Contributes to the management of society/societies.**

Les is a Life Member and has been accorded the highest award of the society - The Gold Service award. There is not a member of this society who has served in as many roles, and given so much time to the society. He has served as President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Member, Editor and Judges Secretary. He has been a part of Victoria's organising committees for Australian Conferences and participated in discussions on "standards". He has only recently stepped back from such positions but continues to contribute to meetings and make presentations.

**Supports shows.**

Les has a long history of exhibiting and in the past has travelled to country areas to exhibit. As a judge Les has and continues to judge in metropolitan Melbourne and country Victoria.

As Judges Secretary he made the appointment of judges to shows and provided opportunities for judges to train. The Victorian State Show has

benefited from Les' assistance in planning and setup as well as organising judges and stewards for the show. He also exhibits at this show.

Les is part of a team that prepares dahlias for Scotsbum Nurseries to care for to be ready for sale at the show. The pot sales making an important financial contribution. For many years Les supplied all sorts of printed material for the society and it should be noted this would have been at no cost or little charge, an enormous contribution to the financial security of the society in the past.

### **Introduced dahlias of quality.**

#### **Encourages new members.**

Les takes all opportunities to promote the dahlia and with that encourage new members. He has actively participated in many displays, expos and presentations promoting the dahlia and encouraging membership. He distributes material for the show encouraging visitors and consequently new members and makes himself available to talk to visitors on those days.

### **Mentor to prospective members and new growers.**

Les is available to give advice and has introduced a neighbour to dahlias. As he has with others, Les supplied tubers and encouragement and the society now has a new member who attends meetings, volunteered at the state show, contributed to the magazine, exhibited, and loves his dahlias.

### **Judging.**

Les has judged many shows over many years and until recently was the society's Judges Secretary. In this position he organised the allocation of judges, training, and assessment. As required, he has judged at the State Show. He has given presentations on judging to horticultural judges, groups, conferences, and member meetings. At our prior show he has judged the Sunday Special section with the public watching. He engages with the public, explaining the process as he goes giving them an insight into how the winner is chosen.

### **Publications.**

Les has been editor of the society's publication "Dahlias" for two terms amounting to two decades of service to the society and members. He has taken the publication from humble copying systems through printing, using his career printing knowledge and skills, to digital preparation and the colour printing by Bounty Print. He has been very important in developing our relationship with our printer.

**Dahlias** was produced four times a year, reduced to three with **Tuber Talk** becoming a DSA publication. It is sent to Victorian, interstate, and international members as well as being used as a promotional tool at displays and speaking engagements. Les worked to encourage a mix of information, dahlia culture, society news from many sources and to suit the beginner to the very experienced. Les encourages articles from within Australia and internationally sourcing articles to add to the quality of the publication as well as writing articles himself. When not editor Les has been available to the editors for information and advice.

Les served on the editorial committee for "Tuber Talk" for some years. "The National Dahlia Society of Victoria fifty years 1960 - 2010" was written by Les. This was a history of the society, based on much research and personal knowledge.

The society is indebted to Les for undertaking this and producing this to be part of the society's celebration of its first 50 years.

Other publications - Les has been involved in the production of many promotional and information leaflets about the society and the growing of dahlias.

### **Presentations for meetings, conferences, and field days.**

Les has for many years made presentations starting from simple talk, talk and show, through slide shows to the digital presentations of the present day. He has done these on growing, exhibiting, judging, events - the dahlia in general. They have been made at meetings, field days, events and displays, when visiting clubs, at Victorian conferences and Australian conferences. If asked he will speak and share his knowledge.

### **Contributions to newsletters etc.**

Les has contributed to **Dahlias** and **Tuber Talk** and, in the past, has provided articles for the magazine of the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria.

### **An ambassador for the dahlia.**

Les' enthusiasm for the dahlia is ever present and this has driven his contact and friendships with members, international contacts and the public at events and functions and his work as magazine editor. Contacts in his daily life are given promotional material and information. Les Lawson - always the Dahlia ambassador.