

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: A.M.A. Founder Allen Monsma

Chris Beytes



A.M.A. Horticulture Inc. announced the passing of company founder Allen (Eelke) Monsma. Allen died suddenly yet peacefully on June 10 surrounded by his loving wife of 65 years, Shirley Monsma, and his daughters and sons-in-law, Connie and Rick Bradt, and Audrey and Peter DeJong. He was 87.

Allan was born in Broeksterwoude (Broeksterwâld), the Netherlands, in 1934. He and his childhood sweetheart and new bride, Shirley, arrived in Canada in 1956 with just \$56 dollars in their pockets.

Allen founded A.M.A. in 1982. Since then, the company has expanded to become a leading horticultural supplier in North America. Allen's life and his personal motto, "Go slowly, but with all your strength," have been quiet encouragements to the A.M.A. team for nearly four decades since then.

"Dad was a pioneer and leader in North America's horticulture industry, though he would never say it of himself," said daughter Connie Bradt, co-managing director of A.M.A. with her husband Rick. "Sometimes this was through big innovations, like inventing Al's Flower Pouch and Al's Hopper, introducing the first North American-style stonewool plug tray to Canada or being the first in North America to commercially produce Ellepots. But most of the time, this was modeled through his countless humble acts of service. Even up until last week, he was often the first one out in production making Ellepots long before the sun came up. That was Dad, steadily working behind the scenes and putting other people's needs first. His quiet strength has been the blueprint for A.M.A.'s success." **GT**