



Donald Bruce Potter, age 74, passed away peacefully at Arden Courts Memory Care in Wilmington, DE, on September 3rd, 2026, after a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease.

Don was born on March 6, 1952 in Philadelphia, PA to Edwin F Potter, Jr., and Marjorie Jeanne Potter. He grew up in Smithtown, Long Island, and graduated from Lafayette College in 1974, where he studied mechanical engineering, sang in the glee club and Meistersingers, and played bassoon in the orchestra and marching band. As a senior, Don served as a student conductor for the glee club.

Following college, Don worked initially as a field engineer and later as a service manager in the Power Generation Systems division of General Electric (GE). He retired in 2018 after a distinguished career of 44 years with the company. As a project specialist, Don was assigned to the more complex gas turbine projects including installations, retrofits, and conversions. In 1999, together with four GE collaborators, Don received an award for a patent detailing a method for detecting flashback events in gas turbines. He later received a Safety Star award for his leadership during a particularly challenging installation of a combined-cycle natural gas-fired facility in Gettysburg, PA. Over his career, Don became a recognized expert in technical subjects and wrote engineering methods for troubleshooting, upgrading, and maintaining the GE fleet of gas turbines.

In their youth, Don and his three sisters attended American square and international folk dances organized by his parents and called by his father. After moving to the Philadelphia area for work in 1974, Don joined the Germantown Country Dancers (GCD) and soon started organizing and teaching dances. He also joined the Kingsessing Morris Men and began taking classes in Scottish country dancing. During these early years, he introduced his parents to both English and Scottish country dancing. In 1986, Don was a founding member of the Colonial Assembly of GCD, a group dedicated to reconstructing and demonstrating in handmade period costumes the social dancing done in 18th c. Philadelphia. Don also served for many years on the boards of GCD and Pinewoods Camp, Inc., a music

and dance camp in Plymouth, MA. In 1979, Don met Abigail Quandt when the two were dancing with their respective teams at the Marlboro Morris Ale in Vermont, and they married in 1986. In 1988, they moved to Wilmington, where they raised their son, Daniel, born in 1994.

Don's youthful fascination with airplanes was sparked by his father, an aeronautical engineer, who built and flew wooden gliders. Years later, Don earned a license to fly sailplanes and enjoyed soaring solo in the clouds over Pennsylvania and Maryland. Don also gained a love of short wave radio from his father, and when he was young, they would spend time together listening to international broadcasts. As an adult, he regularly brought a short wave radio with him on family trips, and it proved invaluable in 1991 when hurricane Bob devastated New England, allowing Don and Abigail to listen to the weather reports while sheltering with no power in their cabin at Pinewoods.

Once in Wilmington, Don became a member of Concord Presbyterian Church, where he sang in the Chancel Choir and served faithfully for many years as a Deacon and an Elder. While on the Physical Plant Committee, Don collaborated with two other engineers in solving a variety of building-related problems, including the replacement of the slate roof and the concave plaster sanctuary ceiling that provides the church's excellent acoustics. Although Don lost his ability to read music as his health declined, the support of the Choir allowed him to continue participating in the Sunday services, where he sang many familiar anthems from memory. For many years, Don was also a steadfast singer in Delaware ChoralArts and the Lafayette Alumni Choir.

From 1991 until 2004, Don performed in the Philadelphia Revels and was joined by Daniel in 2001. Don was a dance director for several shows, performed in the Morris Dance, and was often a featured dancer in "The Lord of the Dance." He later taught sword dancing to the teenage members of the cast. In 2007 and 2008, Don and Abigail built sets, made costumes and performed with Daniel in Concord's productions of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and *Noye's Fludde*. An avid woodworker, Don shared his talents with the community, including building shelves for Wilmington Montessori School and constructing theater sets at Wilmington Friends School, both schools that Daniel attended, and making bookshelves, wooden toys, plant stands, rocking horses, and more for friends and family.

Don will be remembered for his loyalty and dedication to his family and friends and to Concord Church. He eagerly offered his time and technical expertise to help others, and his gleeful and mischievous smile brought joy to many, even as he began to decline.

Don is survived by his wife of 40 years, Abigail Quandt; his sisters, Sue Spencer, Kathy Potter, and Judy Greer; his son, Daniel Potter, and daughter-in-law April Birnie; his granddaughters, Skylar and Ellis Potter; and his granddog, Ginger.

A celebration of life will be held at Concord Presbyterian Church (1800 Fairfax Blvd, Wilmington, DE 19803) at 2 PM on Saturday, November 21, 2026. Experienced singers are invited to join the choir in singing "All Flesh is Grass" by Chris Massa. If you are interested in participating, please contact Daniel Potter (danielpotter1816@gmail.com). He will share sheet music to allow you to learn the piece on your own in advance of a short rehearsal at 1 PM before the service.