

DONALD MACKENZIE ARMSTRONG, O.L.S.
February 24th 1915 – August 21st 2003

Donald MacKenzie Armstrong was born in Swift Current, Saskatchewan on February 24th 1915, the son of Frederick James and Catherine Armstrong.

He graduated from Guelph Collegiate and Haileybury Mining School. Donald articulated to John Farncomb in London and was admitted as an Ontario Land Surveyor on September 1st 1953.



Following service in the Royal Canadian Air Force from 1941 to 1945, Donald was with the Ontario Department of Mines and Ministry of Natural Resources and spent several years in the 1950's on location of mining access roads in Northern Ontario, retracements of Township lines for Geological control, field problems concerning claim staking and mining claim surveys, examination of plans and preparation of descriptions for mining lands.

His other surveying activities were with the engineering office of Giant Yellowknife Gold Mines where he worked for four years after WWII in the capacity of an underground surveyor and draftsman. He worked for Hollinger Gold Mines in 1947 as an instrument man on the preliminary survey to locate a railway line from Sept Illes to Labrador, which ultimately became the Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway.

Most of his career in surveying before and after becoming an O.L.S. had to do with mining. His greatest satisfaction was in locating access roads in Northern Ontario. The period in Yellowknife during the boom days was an unforgettable experience; it was a colourful and exciting town in the 1940's and Don found time to do some part time prospecting for gold and uranium. In underground mapping all the survey stations were given coordinate values including elevation and related to surface triangulation.

The six months he spent on the Labrador Survey were the toughest due to the harshness of both the climate and terrain and the fact that grade could not exceed 2%.

The crew worked a seven-day week and twelve-hour days were commonplace. Don said there was not a sign of human life for 400 miles except for a few abandoned Indian Camp sites where he acquired a wholesome respect for the pioneer surveyors.

Donald passed away in his 89th year. Beloved husband of Pearl (nee MacKinnon). Predeceased by a sister, Elizabeth and her husband John Wideman of Guelph and their daughter Wendy. He will be sadly missed by his niece, Jacqueline and her husband Earl McCutcheon of Guelph and his Grand-Niece, Catherine and her husband Victor Orzech and their son Jacob of London, Ontario.
