

SYDNEY GRENVILLE HANCOCK 1909 - 1996

Past President Sydney Hancock passed away June 12, 1996 at the age of 87 in his beloved town of Atikokan. OLS #610 received his commission June 1, 1937.

Sydney was born to Henry Sydney Hancock and Leslie (Edwards) in Fort William, Ontario on September 8th, 1909. He attended Fort William Public School and Fort William Collegiate Institute. He and his wife Grace Leigh Ross had four children: Sydney Peter, John Rodger, James Francis and Sydney Grenville.

From 1928 to 1936, he was a member of the Reserve Unit - 17th Signal Corps., 18th Medium Battery in Port Arthur, Ontario.

He was involved in almost every imaginable community activity.

We are pleased to present two retrospectives about his accomplishments, following a commemoration from Past President E.W. (Red) Petzold. The first retrospective is the introduction given for him on the occasion of his receiving the AOLS Centenary Award in 1992; the second is an article from the *Atikokan Progress* in 1991 regarding his retirement as an active Ontario Land Surveyor.



Commemoration by Past President E.W. Petzold

Sydney Hancock is a national treasure. I use the present tense. How can a man like Sydney ever pass from our memory?

His contribution to the development of our country is well known, and well documented in the 1953 OLS Annual Report. He rose to become President of our Association in 1972 (when I served as his Vice) and was a respected practitioner in North Western Ontario until 1990.

Sydney was at his best as a raconteur. How can we ever forget the great stories told at the podium and at the Veterans' Luncheon in later years, all avowed to be true and told in a style that no one can emulate? Even in his fading years, his wit remained sharp. We visited him the last summer he was at home and although it took a few minutes to warm up, the stories and puns poured forth.

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Sydney was even his best in the wee hours of the morning. I remember at 2:00 a.m. at an Ottawa meeting, when we were still visiting and Sydney was not quite ready for bed. "Let's call Mrs. B." I couldn't dissuade him as he further reasoned, "She's one of the prettiest surveyor's wives I know and I know she would love to talk to us.", and so he did. And lo and behold, she was quite pleasant to Sydney and we went our ways to bed.

For those who feel that they could draft freehand, Sydney was a model. His field notes and freehand plans could serve as examples of how we should letter our work. He was quite proud, in the latter years of his practice, that the average age of his crew was 79!!!

Sydney's wife Grace, a considerable raconteur on her own, deserves an honourable mention, as his patient and supportive spouse.

Centenary Award Introduction

Our next recipient is no doubt used to this sort of fuss. Sydney Hancock has lived his life in service to his community and his profession with humour and grace. In 1977 Government House and Canada's Secretary of State marked Sydney's remarkable contribution to the well-being of those around him with a medal of honour of Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee. Now we are proud to present Sydney with a Centenary Award for his work in aid of his town, his fellow citizens and his profession.

As Reeve of Atikokan for 15 years and President of the Atikokan Chamber of Commerce, Sydney showed the town his brand of commitment. And his love for his northern corner of the province did not stop with Atikokan. He also served as president of the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association and the president of the Northwestern Ontario Development Council.

Sydney has also found expression for his belief in helping others as director of the Quetico Centre, president of the Atikokan Red Cross, chairman of the Manpower Committee, and in his work with many other groups like Atikokan General Hospital, Library, and Lion's Club.

But even with all this on his plate, Sydney has found the energy to distinguish himself as an Ontario Land Surveyor. Since 1937, when he joined the Association, Sydney has served in many capacities, including as president in 1972 and as regional group executive. He also managed to balance his work as a surveyor with his involvement in Steep Rock Iron Mines. He did the original surveying and then later served as the owner's representative and assistant to the general manager.

But even two full-time careers didn't stop Sydney from finding time for fun. He has slithered down many a curling rink, and heckled many a golf caddy. His sense of humour, in fact, is legendary. It's the kind of wit that no doubt helps him keep a balanced perspective on things.

Our Association is distinguished by the long time service of people of the calibre of Sydney Hancock. Syd, this one's for you.